



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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CONTENTS

30 May 1996

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Butrus-Ghali on Iraq, New Term, Other Issues [*London AL-HAYAH 24 May*] 1

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Abbas on Need for Israeli Leaders Who Believe in Peace [*Jericho VOP*] 6

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Middayn Says Peace Process at 'Point of No Return' [*Jericho VOP*] 6

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Views Israeli Elections' Preliminary Results [*Jericho VOP*] 6

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Zayidah Foresees Peace Process 'Complications' [*Tel Aviv Radio*] ... 7

Palestinian Affairs: PA Official Warns Against Reopening Oslo Accords [*Tel Aviv Radio*] 7

Palestinian Affairs: Security Official on Israeli Elections, 'Arafat's Health [*Rome Radio*] 8

Palestinian Affairs: Agreements Binding Regardless of Israeli Election Results [*AL-QUDS 29 May*] 8

Palestinian Affairs: Radio Commentary Hopes Israelis Will Opt for Peace [*Jericho VOP*] 9

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat's Wife Denies Yasir's Health Suffering [*Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA 25 May*] 9

Palestinian Affairs: Article on 'Arafat's 'Sudden Health Crisis' in Cairo [*ROSE AL-YUSUF 20 May*] 10

Palestinian Affairs: Fatah Document on Amendment of Covenant [*IRIS News Update*] 10

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Algeria: 'Disagreements' Within GIA Led to Killing of Monks [*London AL-HAYAH 29 May*] 14

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak, al-Qadhdhafi Hold News Conference [*Cairo Radio*] 14

Egypt: Al-Qadhdhafi Speaks on Lockerbie Affair, Arab Unity [*Tripoli TV*] 18

Egypt: Libya's al-Qadhdhafi Departs Egypt [*MENA*] 19

Egypt: Official Comments on Israeli Elections [*MENA*] 19

Egypt: Dailies Comment on Israeli Elections, U.S. Position [*MENA*] 19

Egypt: Musa Denies 'Other Parties' To Attend Amman Summit [*MENA*] 20

Egypt: Ukrainian Deputy Premier Meets Mubarak, Comments on Ties [*Cairo Radio*] 20

Egypt: Ukrainian Official Leaves After Visit [*MENA*] 20

Libya

Libya: 'Militant Islamic Group' Implicated in Benghazi Clashes [*London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 28 May*] 20

Libya: Tripoli TV Shows Hangings of 4 People for Murder 21

Morocco

Morocco: Spanish Prime Minister Aznar Departs [*Madrid ABC*] 21

Sudan

Sudan: 7-Point Plan for U.S.-Sudanese Relations Presented [*London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 28 May*] 22

Sudan: Al-Bashir on Sanctions, Regional Relations [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 29 May]	23
Western Sahara	
Western Sahara: UN Suspends Referendum Operation, Reduces Troop Numbers [Algiers TV]	26
ARABIAN PENINSULA	
Bahrain	
Bahrain: Explosion Reportedly Injures Wife of Arrested Protester [AFP]	27
Bahrain: U.S. General Holds News Conference on Regional Security [WAKH]	27
Kuwait	
Kuwait: Speaker Calls For Severing of Relations With Libya [KUNA]	27
Saudi Arabia	
Saudi Arabia: U.S. Line on Iraqi Oil Linked to Pro-Saudi Regime Line [London AL-ISLAH 27 May]	28
Saudi Arabia: PRC Defense Minister Arrives on Visit [Riyadh Radio]	28
IRAQ	
Iraq: National Assembly Session Postponed 'Until Further Notice' [Baghdad TV]	29
Iraq: Al-Anbari Explains Oil Deal Procedures [INA]	29
Iraq: Al-Anbari on Oil-for-Food Implementation [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 25 May]	29
Iraq: Oil Pumped Into Turkish Pipeline [INA]	30
Iraq: 2 Senior Army Officers Reportedly 'Defect' to Opposition [Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution]	31
Iraq: Spokesman Refutes Iranian Statements on POW's [INA]	31
ISRAEL	
Israel: Netanyahu Expected To Win by 1-1.5 Percent Edge [Tel Aviv Radio]	33
Israel: Final Election Results Expected on 31 May [Jerusalem Radio]	33
Israel: Party Leaders React to Exit Polls; Turnout Data Given [Jerusalem Radio]	33
Israel: Netanyahu Addresses Supporters, Says Must 'Not Lose Hope' [Jerusalem Radio]	34
Israel: Baraq Said Seeking Party Leadership, Unity Government [Tel Aviv Radio]	34
Israel: Peres Said 'Furious' With Baraq Action; Labor Leaders Meet [Tel Aviv Radio]	34
Israel: Labor Figures See U.S. Pressure Leading to Bloc With Likud [Jerusalem Radio]	34
Israel: Geshet's Levi Says Bloc To Remain United 'No Matter What' [Jerusalem Radio]	35
Israel: Labor's Ramon Contacts SHAS To Propose Meeting [Jerusalem Radio]	35
Israel: Netanyahu's Pledge to Right-Wing Parties Reported [Jerusalem Radio]	35
Israel: Eytan—Oslo Agreements 'Have To Be Reopened' [Tel Aviv Radio]	36
Israel: Peres Categorically Denies Rumors About 'Not Feeling Well' [Tel Aviv Radio]	36
Israel: Voting Statistics Show Unprecedented Turnout Among Arabs [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 30 May]	36
Israel: Hebron Mayor Seeks Immediate Redeployment; Settlers 'Happy' [Jerusalem Radio]	36
Israel: Likud MK Says Agreement on Hebron Pullout Must Be Honored [Tel Aviv Radio]	37
Israel: Arab Official Rejects Claims on Premiership Voting [Tel Aviv Radio]	37
Israel: Editorial Criticizes Clinton's 'Intolerable' Interference [THE JERUSALEM POST 30 May]	37
Israel: SHAS Victory Seen as 'Breakthrough,' Blow to Rabbi Schach [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 30 May]	38
JORDAN	
Jordan: Minister on Impact of Oil-for-Food Deal, Inter-Arab Trade [London AL-HAYAH 28 May]	39

Jordan: Paper 'Concerned' About Likud Victory in Israeli Elections [AL-DUSTUR 30 May]	39
---	----

LEBANON

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Returns From Brussels Talks on Reconstruction [Beirut Radio]	41
Lebanon: Hizballah—Al-Hariri Seeks To 'Frustrate' Resistance Spirit [VOL]	41
Lebanon: Hizballah Deputy on Elections, Relations With al-Hariri [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 27 May]	41
Lebanon: SLA Admits 2 Members Killed in Hizballah Attack [Voice of the South]	42
Lebanon: Blast Targets Israeli Patrol, Wounds 5 [VOL]	43

SYRIA

Syria: Minister Denies Meeting Israeli Official Aboard Plane [AL-BA'TH 28 May]	44
Syria: Israeli Election Campaigns Ignored Need for 'Just' Peace [Damascus Radio]	44
Syria: TISHRIN Warns Against Israel's 'New Jerusalem' Proposal [SANA]	45
Syria: Paper Says Plans To Partition Iraq 'Failed' [Damascus Radio]	45

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Expects To Be Prime Minister Under Rabbani [London AL-HAYAH 28 May]	46
Afghanistan: Hekmatyar To Assume Office in Kabul 'Soon' [AFP]	46
Afghanistan: Weekly—U.S. Responsible for 'Devastating Wars' [IRNA]	47
Afghanistan: Pakistani Politician To Visit Taliban in Kandahar [Radio Message of Freedom]	47

India

India: Deve Gowda Meets Front Leaders on Government Formation [Delhi Radio]	48
India: CPI Official Tells AFP Party May Join New Government [AFP]	48
India: 2 Killed in Election-Related Violence in Kashmir [AFP]	49
India: Voting Begins in Final Phase of Elections in Kashmir [Delhi Radio]	50
India: Article Urges Continuing 'Nonalignment' Foreign Policy [THE TELEGRAPH 27 May]	50
India: Article Views 'Unprecedented American Trade Aggression' [INDIAN EXPRESS 25 May]	51
India: Article Views Region's Nuclear Policy [THE PIONEER 28 May]	52
India: Russia To Aid in Building 1st Nuclear Sub by 2004 [THE ASIAN AGE 25 May]	54
India: Navy Chief Denies Plan for Nuclear Submarines by 2004 [THE ASIAN AGE 25 May]	54
India: Union Finance Minister Comments on Economic Issues [THE ECONOMIC TIMES 19 May]	55

Iran

Iran: Paper Views Clinton's Approach to Proposed Sanctions Bill [IRAN NEWS 25 May]	56
Iran: Commentary Views U.S., European Differences Over Sanctions [Tehran International]	56
Iran: Radio Denounces U.S. Sanctions Against Iran [Tehran International]	57
Iran: Paper Views PLO, Israel 'Invitation' to Opposition Groups [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 22 May]	57
Iran: Commentary Raises Questions Over Iraq-UN Oil Deal [IRAN NEWS 22 May]	58
Iran: Official on Delay in Exchange of Iran-Iraq POW Lists [Tehran TV]	58
Iran: Construction of New Dam on Euphrates in Turkey Viewed [Tehran International]	59
Iran: Commentary Assesses EU-Syria Relations [Tehran Radio]	59
Iran: Daily Condemns Killing of French Monks [IRNA]	60
Iran: Commentary Notes Move Toward Peace in Afghanistan [Tehran Radio]	60
Iran: IRAN NEWS Hails Rabbani-Hekmatyar Accord, Slams Taliban [IRNA]	61

Iran: Radio, Television Cooperation Discussed With Vatican [Tehran Radio]	61
Iran: ABRAR on Impact of Railroad on World Trade [19 May]	62
Iran: Ground Forces Commander Comments on 'Velayat' Maneuvers [Tehran TV]	63
Iran: Commentary Assesses 'Velayat' Military Maneuvers [Tehran International]	63
Iran: Daily Stresses Crucial Role of Armed Forces [IRNA]	63
Iran: Ayatollah Khamene'i Leads 'Ashura Mourning Ceremonies [IRNA]	64
Iran: Group Meets in Advance of New Majles Term [IRAN NEWS 23 May]	64
Iran: Majles Presents Report on Tehran Municipality Misconduct [IRAN NEWS 23 May]	65
Iran: Rafsanjani Endorses Daily Hit by Reported Paper Shortage [AKHBAR 23 May]	65
Iran: Minister—Islamic Laws Should Be Observed in University [TEHRAN TIMES 23 May] ..	66
Iran: Ansar-e Hezbollah Protests Speech by Majles Deputy [IRAN NEWS 23 May]	66
Iran: Paper Supports Keeping Higher Education in Public Sector [KEYHAN 20 May]	66
Iran: Paper on Need for Greater Expertise in Cultural Affairs [KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL 22 May]	67
Iran: New Television, Radio Officials Appointed [ABRAR 25 May]	67
Iran: Denial of Majles Candidates Questioned [5 Mar]	68
Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU on Propaganda [5 Mar]	70
Iran: Separation of Religion, Politics Seen [5 Mar]	72
Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU on Meaning of Votes [5 Mar]	73
Iran: Swiss Company's Debt Totals Millions [PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]	74
Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU Surveys Readers [5 Mar]	75
Iran: Foreign Exchange Spending Questioned [PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]	75
Iran: Rejection of Deputies Said Ambiguous [PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]	76
Iran: SAFF Surveys Readers [SAFF 21 Apr-20 May]	76

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Businessmen Urge Steps To Lure Foreign Investors [THE KATHMANDU POST 23 May]	78
---	----

Pakistan

Pakistan: Nawaz Reports 'Salient Features' of PML-N Manifesto [THE NATION 25 May]	78
Pakistan: Leader of Al-Ansar Movement Interviewed [AL-JIHAD Mar]	79
Pakistan: Kashmiri Leaders Under Arrest on Election Eve [Islamabad TV]	82
Pakistan: Joint Venture Agreed With Canada To Maintain PAF Aircraft [THE NATION 26 May]	82
Pakistan: Ukrainian Delegation Arrives for Talks on Tank Sale [THE NEWS 26 May]	83
Pakistan: Authorities Arrest 2 for Counterfeiting U.S. Currency [THE MUSLIM 24 May]	84
Pakistan: Cities on Anti-Terrorism Alert During Muslim Festival [THE NEWS 27 May]	84
Pakistan: India Accused of Shooting on School in Kashmir [AFP]	84
Pakistan: Government Plans for New Budget, IMF 'Pressure' Noted [BUSINESS RECORDER 24 May]	85
Pakistan: Rs17 Billion in Taxes Proposed for New Budget [THE MUSLIM 25 May]	86
Pakistan: Daily Defends IMF Proposals on Budget [THE MUSLIM 27 May]	87

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Details Offensive in Trincomalee [Tamil Eelam News WWW]	87
Sri Lanka: Tamil Tiger Guerrillas Kill 10 Troopers in Fresh Battles [AFP]	88

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Butrus-Ghali on Iraq, New Term, Other Issues

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24 May 96 p 4

[Interview with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali by Raghidah Dirgham in New York; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Dirgham] Let us begin with the agreement on the memorandum of understanding for the implementation of Resolution 986. Where would you place the signing of the agreement on the list of your achievements as secretary general? Would it top the list?

[Butrus-Ghali] I see it as a UN achievement rather than an achievement by the secretary general. The aims of the United Nations include helping people develop. There can be no doubt that the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people have delayed development. That is why the various states strove to have Resolution 986 passed. That resolution takes into consideration the crisis of confidence between the Security Council and Iraq as well as the humanitarian requests of the Iraqi people. The United Nations, first, succeeded in persuading the Iraqi side to accept the principle of negotiations which it had rejected more than once. Second, it succeeded in striking the desired balance between the Security Council's will to control the distribution of foodstuffs and Iraq's will to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Our success in achieving that balance can be considered a success for UN diplomacy.

[Dirgham] Why, in your view, was the Iraqi leadership convinced by your efforts to ensure implementation of the resolution and the signing of the memorandum of understanding? Why, in your opinion, was that decision made?

[Butrus-Ghali] I have no explanation for that position. Initially the position was frequently one of rejection. In more than one contact I had tried to convince the Iraqi side that it was in its interest to take a positive stand on that resolution.

As a result of numerous contacts, on numerous occasions, over a six month period, we succeeded in persuading the Iraqi side to start negotiating.

[Dirgham] Clearly, the agreement required a political decision not only from the Iraqi leadership but also from the U.S. Administration. What, in your view, prompted both sides to make these positive decisions?

[Butrus-Ghali] It seems to me to have been the humanitarian crisis of the Iraqi people.

[Dirgham] Is that the reason?

[Butrus-Ghali] That is the real reason.

[Dirgham] There were some difficult stages in the negotiations. Were you always confident that the agreement would be signed and that the persuasion process would be fruitful or did you feel frustrated at times?

[Butrus-Ghali] Like any other human being, one is sometimes disappointed and sometimes optimistic. What is important in negotiations is the ability to persevere and be patient despite the fact that new obstacles might appear at the very last moment. One has to continue. Through that ability to persevere, a negotiator or a mediator can succeed.

[Dirgham] Which were the most difficult periods? Was it during the U.S. and British amendments or was it last Sunday as you awaited the Iraqi answer?

[Butrus-Ghali] There were several difficult periods as well as easy periods. There can be no doubt that Hans Corell (UN adviser on legal affairs who headed the general secretariat's delegation in the negotiations) played an important part as did the Iraqi negotiator Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari in overcoming some technical difficulties. There is also no doubt that many states extended their support for the continuation of the negotiations.

[Dirgham] The issue has attracted the world's attention. As this is the first interview you have given after the signing, could you share with us, acquaint us with what happened in the last hours before the signing?

[Butrus-Ghali] As in any negotiations, difficulties emerge in the final hours. What is important is the ability to continue and to surmount the difficulties.

[Dirgham] Last Sunday Iraq requested assurances that there were no U.S. surprises lying in wait for it. Was it difficult for you to get such assurances or was that easy?

[Butrus-Ghali] What?

[Dirgham] U.S. assurances.

[Butrus-Ghali] That is inaccurate. Under Article 13 of the resolution (986) I am authorized by the Security Council to sign the agreement which I will submit to the Security Council. The Council gave me the authorization and, therefore, there is no need for any change in the future unless a new resolution is issued by the Security Council.

[Dirgham] We say that because the United States and Britain had previously introduced amendments to the memorandum of understanding. That is why Iraq was afraid of another surprise and that is why it sought assurances.

[Butrus-Ghali] Not at all. They were not so much amendments as discussions on interpretation of the most important articles of the agreement. Resolution 986 includes conflicting principles: the principle of sovereignty on the one hand and the principle of international control on the other. Reconciling these two principles was a painstaking process resulting in various interpretations.

[Dirgham] One theory is that the U.S. administration's strategic logic prevailed over its election logic and that realism finally prevailed in Baghdad. Do you agree with that theory?

[Butrus-Ghali] Theories are usually detached from reality. They have to do with authors and thinkers and are usually open to study. They are usually detached from reality.

[Dirgham] What effect will the implementation of Resolution 986 have on Iraq and its relations with the United Nations?

[Butrus-Ghali] There is no link between this resolution and the other resolutions, and the hope is that implementation of this resolution might help the Iraqi Government implement the other resolutions.

[Dirgham] There are fears that implementation of Resolution 986 might become a de facto alternative to Article 22 of Resolution 987. Are such fears justified?

[Butrus-Ghali] No. If you read the first paragraph of that resolution you would find that this agreement deals with a transitional situation. There is no connection between the two.

[Dirgham] Some U.S. officials have expressed the view that implementation of Resolution 986 will make it easier for the U.S. administration to oppose the full lifting of the oil embargo against Iraq, and to resist the pressures of lifting that embargo, because of the oil flow and the alleviation of human suffering. Do you fear that?

[Butrus-Ghali] No, because there is a difference between the two resolutions. Resolution 986 is for urgent humanitarian considerations. The other resolutions are linked to the general policy on Iraq's armaments which, if implemented, would make it difficult not to lift the embargo.

[Dirgham] There is some talk about the possibility of increasing the quantities of oil Iraq is allowed to export under Resolution 986, from \$1 billion every 90 days to a quantity that would meet the humanitarian needs. You, of course, could influence that.

[Butrus-Ghali] We should first begin with the initial phase and see the result of its implementation and whether it helps ease the suffering. The idea of increas-

ing the quantity will not come up for a long time. Implementation of the resolution will take two or three months...It is too early to talk about increasing the quantity.

[Dirgham] Will your success in bringing about this agreement boost support for a second term as secretary general, in your view, or will it be a oppositional motive for those who wished for a failure in reaching agreement?

[Butrus-Ghali] I have not made a decision regarding a second term, and, therefore, I cannot answer the question.

[Dirgham] When will you announce your candidacy for a second term?

[Butrus-Ghali] I have not made that decision yet. I still have five months to overcome the hesitation.

[Dirgham] Why do you hesitate?

[Butrus-Ghali] For several considerations pertaining to higher policy, the UN financial crisis, and many engagements of mine. The reluctance is related to work within the United Nations.

[Dirgham] Is it linked to the claims that the United States does not wish to support you for a second term?

[Butrus-Ghali] No, because if the superpowers do not wish me to continue then there would be no need (to continue). I am interested in the success of the organization and not in personal considerations. If the superpowers did not agree to a second term and did not support me, then there would be no need for such a second term. It is the duty of the secretary general to cooperate with the states, especially the big states, and if they were not happy about a second term then there would be no need for a second term.

[Dirgham] Do you believe that some of these states are unhappy about a second term?

[Butrus-Ghali] There has been no decision by any state.

[Dirgham] When will you begin your contacts to find out the positions of these states, to settle the hesitation?

[Butrus-Ghali] As late as possible, because I have daily problems and do not want contacts to affect day-to-day work.

[Dirgham] It has been said that by insisting on the issuance of the Qana report you reduced your chances of re-election as UN secretary general.

[Butrus-Ghali] That question should be asked when I decide (to seek) re-election.

[Dirgham] Why did you insist on the release of the Qana report despite the U.S. and other pressures to prevent that?

[Butrus-Ghali] No, that is not true. "Nobody put pressure on me at all." [quotemarks as published] What pressure there was came from the Israeli side. They wanted to delay the report until they had submitted their own position. We delayed the report until after the necessary contacts were made with the Israeli leadership.

[Dirgham] Why did you insist on issuing the report? Did you not want Butrus-Ghali to go down in history as having provided a cover-up for the massacre?

[Butrus-Ghali] It has nothing to do with history. There are precedents. There were reports in the past. It is not a question of gallantry or anything like that. It is a procedure followed at the United Nations.

[Dirgham] And so there was a Qana report. It went into the Security Council's archives and was hidden or disappeared. Did you wish it to be different?

[Butrus-Ghali] The report did not disappear. It is there as an official document. When future historians search they will find the report.

[Dirgham] As secretary general, you have tended to argue in more than one field and place. Some have praised you and some have criticized you. Some have praised you on some issues and criticized you on other issues. Let us say that you have to do some soul-searching now. Where did you go wrong, or did you go wrong?

[Butrus-Ghali] Every human being is of course liable to be wrong or right. I was wrong to think that I could reform the United Nations in a short period of time. It transpired that it (the reform process) required more time. I erred in my interpretation of certain positions.

[Dirgham] What positions?

[Butrus-Ghali] Various positions. I am now speaking theoretically, but anyone could make mistakes. Furthermore, the United Nations cannot be successful in all operations. Some operations may succeed and some may not. The same thing applies to any profession. A journalist may or may not successfully analyze a certain situation.

[Dirgham] Is there a mistake you made that you regret or are sorry about and wish you had a chance to rectify?

[Butrus-Ghali] I did not succeed in convincing the international community regarding the Rwanda massacre. I tried to convince, mobilize, and get aid but I did not succeed, and a massacre occurred which (claimed) half a million victims. It may have been a joint responsibility

but I am responsible because I failed to convince the various states...on numerous occasions I failed to convince these states. That may be due to my inability to persuade or to the fact that these states took a certain position and I would not have succeeded however hard I tried. I spent a year trying to persuade various states to take a stand and have a contingency plan for dealing with the genocide that might occur in Burundi. I have not succeeded to this day. That does not mean I should not continue my work.

[Dirgham] Do you think you made a mistake in Bosnia by not working for the necessary moral mobilization?

[Butrus-Ghali] Not at all. I tried to ask for additional forces but did not succeed. And I have written, and what I have written will be published in the future. I wrote that the United Nations could not undertake that mission and that multinational forces should undertake (the mission) because we have neither the financial or military capabilities nor the necessary equipment to tackle that crisis. Letters were sent on some well-known dates and are recorded in the Security Council. I sent several letters but they did not answer them. So as far as conscience is concerned I have done the impossible and the proof is that (in Bosnia) now and after the signing of the peace treaty, there are 60,000 military personnel. During the war there were no more than 7,000-10,000. Today there are 60,000 military personnel with heavy weapons. Before the peace treaty we had neither arms nor intelligence information nor the necessary resources.

[Dirgham] Do you believe that the United Nations also failed or was made to fail in Somalia too?

[Butrus-Ghali] As I have already said, there are cases in which (the United Nations) succeeds and others in which it fails. Why not accept that a doctor in a hospital succeeds in some operations and fails in other operations? Public opinion does not argue and say the doctor failed. It just happens. The United Nations has the same problems. It could succeed and it could fail.

[Dirgham] Sometimes a doctor is sued for compensation.

[Butrus-Ghali] Yes, and a lawyer defending a case may succeed in getting an acquittal for the defendant but another lawyer may not be able to do so and the defendant is executed. What I mean to say is that the United Nations is no different. It is an organization comprising a group of individuals who are no different from ordinary individuals and it is no different from governments. Sometimes it succeeds and sometimes it fails.

[Dirgham] Let us assume for the sake of argument that you still had five years more to go in the current term, what would your priorities and wishes be?

[Butrus-Ghali] I cannot answer that question because an answer would be interpreted to mean that I have made my decision but I have not made my decision yet.

[Dirgham] In your speech at the Sharm al-Shaykh summit you urged the conferees to use the United Nations against terrorism. What did you mean?

[Butrus-Ghali] I meant that terrorism has become an international phenomenon and can therefore only be tackled or confronted through international organizations and cooperation among states, or through international resolutions or international charters to face that international phenomenon. Like a disease, terrorism has become an international phenomenon. The environment has become an international phenomenon and so has drug trafficking. An international issue can only be tackled in an international framework.

[Dirgham] But you know perfectly well that there is some political disagreement on the definition of terrorism. To some it is terrorism and to others it is resistance.

[Butrus-Ghali] The first step should be agreement on the concept of international terrorism. If there is agreement in defining or classifying the crime we can then move to the second phase of agreement among states on the types of terrorism and the need to combat them. If funds are collected in Europe for the purpose of fighting an Arab government then there must be an international agreement banning the collection of funds in Europe. If weapons are provided, there must be agreement.

Terrorism has become an international crime and an international phenomenon that requires international confrontation. Of course, terrorism has many aspects. There is the material aspect, the financial aspect, the arms aspect, the contacts aspect, and the extradition aspect. These matters call for efforts through international conferences and new international laws and through agreements between states, like any other phenomenon. For instance, there was an agreement on the law of the sea. That took years to prepare. The general problems of the seas, or passage through the seas, or exploitation of the seas, can only be tackled through international agreement.

[Dirgham] Let us talk about one particular area where there is a UN presence and where the definition varies. We are here referring to Hizballah in Lebanon. In the view of Israel and the United States it is a terrorist organization but in the view of Syria and Lebanon it represents legitimate resistance.

[Butrus-Ghali] So there is no agreement on that particular group. What matters is that there should be agreement among states.

[Dirgham] You mean common denominators.

[Butrus-Ghali] Yes, if there is disagreement regarding a certain movement in an Arab state or a movement in some European state, we can say that we do not have an agreement but we must begin by trying to agree.

[Dirgham] You have been the target of some assault attempts by some extremist organizations and groups. Do you fear for your life?

[Butrus-Ghali] No. I believe in fate.

[Dirgham] What do you fear?

[Butrus-Ghali] I fear failure when I embark on an operation. I want to succeed. I care about success not for its own sake but because when I start something I must finish it. Of course I would fear failure.

[Dirgham] Why are relations between you and Madeleine Albright, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, so bad?

[Butrus-Ghali] That is not true. Relations between me and the ambassador are excellent.

[Dirgham] There was some confrontation between you and her at the Security Council and elsewhere.

[Butrus-Ghali] That happens. Relations with you are now excellent despite some confrontations which occurred between us. I had dinner at her (Albright's) home privately recently. Relations are excellent.

[Dirgham] Relations are cordial, or is there mutual admiration?

[Butrus-Ghali] Relations are cordial.

[Dirgham] You succeeded in your efforts to persuade Iraq to implement Resolution 986 and in your efforts to contain the conflict between Yemen and Eritrea. Why have you failed in resolving the Libyan issue despite the fact that you clearly have authority and jurisdiction?

[Butrus-Ghali] I cannot say that my efforts for a peaceful resolution of the Libyan-Western dispute have failed. I have talked to you about the importance of patience and perseverance in the negotiations and the attempts to bridge the views of the disputing parties. Let me first point out that the Libyan-Western dispute is not only about Lockerbie, where the PanAm airliner was blown up — the issue which concerns the United States and Britain — but there is also the demands of the UTI plane bombing case that France insists a French investigating magistrate should fulfill. Since the Security

Council passed Resolution 731 in 1992 which, in its fourth executive article, authorizes the secretary general to encourage cooperation from the Libyan Government in providing full answers to all the demands raised, and on the question of extraditing the two suspects in the case, my contacts with the parties concerned have not stopped. I have sent seven envoys to Tripoli for consultation on ways of implementing the resolutions concerned. My contacts with Libyan officials have continued and we have indeed made some progress, on the Libyan-British track, where Libya cooperated positively in supplying the British with information pertaining to past cooperation with the IRA. Contacts are now continuing with the aim of making similar progress on the French track. The third issue, on which no progress has been made, is the extradition question of the two Libyan suspects for trial in the United States or Britain, as stipulated in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

[Dirgham] The Arab League and the OAU support Libya's position and proposals concerning the extradition of the two Lockerbie suspects. Do you support these proposals?

[Butrus-Ghali] Yes, the Arab League and the OAU support the proposal that the suspects be tried by a Scottish court, under the Scottish judicial system, and Scottish laws, provided that this takes place in The Hague. Two days ago I received a letter from the Arab League secretary general and the OAU expressing these two organizations' support for that proposal, and I have submitted that letter to the Security Council chairman to do what is necessary.

[Dirgham] Do you intend to reactivate that file soon or do you see no room for a personal role there?

[Butrus-Ghali] I have not stopped working on that file, but once again I say that the process of negotiation and bridging views is a long-drawn-out process. What is important is that the parties should continue to negotiate and have the necessary political will to achieve a settlement.

[Dirgham] Apart from Libya and Iraq, another Arab state has come under the yoke of Chapter VII [of the UN Charter] and the Security Council has imposed sanctions on it, namely Sudan. The council has tasked you with trying to persuade Sudan to hand over the three suspects accused of trying to assassinate President Hosni Mubarak and to stop supporting and harboring terrorism. Is there hope for success by you, or are these impossible and floating demands that cannot be implemented because of the general nature of the second part?

[Butrus-Ghali] As soon as Resolution 1044 was issued last December, I sent a special envoy to Khartoum who also visited some states neighboring Sudan that had submitted written or oral complaints to the United Nations about what they saw as Sudanese involvement in destabilizing terrorist activities. I submitted a report to the Security Council about the mission of that envoy and the result of his contacts in the capitals he visited. The report reflected the positions of these parties, especially that of Khartoum. As regards the question of scope for additional successful efforts, I say that it is the secretary general's duty to continue his attempts. I continue to make such efforts and while, of course, I cannot guarantee their success I hope to contain the situation and avoid further deterioration. There is continuous consultation on this matter between me, the brother secretary general of the Arab League, and the brother secretary general of the OAU. I hope that Khartoum will cooperate with these efforts so that a solution may be found and so that Sudan would be able to gear its energies toward finding a peaceful solution to the dispute between northern and southern Sudan.

[Dirgham] As an Arab holding the position of secretary general, what are the priorities you would wish Arabs to adopt?

[Butrus-Ghali] More interest by the Arab states in international issues, and more interest by the Arab states in the instrument used in international relations, namely the United Nations. If the Arab states paid more attention to the United Nations, the UN role would grow and that would be in the interest of the third world states and most states in the world. My wish is for more interest in the United Nations which means more interest in international issues. The public opinion says: Why should I be interested in Nicaragua? What have I got to do with Nicaragua? Why should I care about Guatemala? But if I want Guatemala to care about the Palestinian issue I should care about the current conflict in Guatemala. If I want any state in Asia to show interest in the Middle East question then I should show interest in Asian issues. Secondly, international and global problems will increase, whether in relation to the environment, crime, terrorism, or disease. That is why internal problems can only be remedied by curing or showing interest in international problems. What I ask of Arab public opinion is this: Please, pay attention to international problems. Showing interest in international problems does not mean just interest in Arab problems but also in problems on all the world's continents. We should be prepared to play a role on the world stage and should come out of the current isolationist trend or limited regional trend. One clear example is that a state has collapsed and disintegrated. That was

Yugoslavia, the disjointed and partitioned small state of various nationalities and somewhat different tribes, the state which from the first conference of the Nonaligned Movement in 1961 to the death of Tito in 1981 played the role of a big power. The Arab states have the financial resources and the capabilities to play a part in building international society in the 21st century.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Abbas on Need for Israeli Leaders Who Believe in Peace

JN2905151496 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1300 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] PLO Executive Committee Secretary Mahmud 'Abbas, Abu-Mazin, said that what counts for the Palestinian people, regarding the Israeli elections, is that the government and the Knesset are chaired by someone who believes in peace and is concerned about the Palestinian and Israeli peoples' interests and the peace process. This concern can be displayed by showing a desire to solve the final status issues to pave the way for the independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

In a statement to the Voice of Palestine, Abu-Mazin stressed the need that the Arabs within the Green Line attain their rights and equality in the political and social fields.

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Middayn Says Peace Process at 'Point of No Return'

JN2905201396 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1800 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Legislative Council member Furayh Abu-Middayn said that the peace process is now at the point of no return regardless of who wins in the Israeli elections. Abu-Middayn added that the international community and the Arab world will not at all allow Israel to return to war.

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Views Israeli Elections' Preliminary Results

JN3005102296 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
0420 GMT 30 May 96

[Telephone Interview with Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council and minister in the Palestinian Authority, by Fathi al-Barqawi in the Jericho studio on 30 May; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Barqawi] Dr. Sha'th, good morning.

[Sha'th] Good morning.

[Al-Barqawi] The Israeli election results so far indicate that Peres will be the prime minister and the Labor will form the government. What does this mean to us, the Palestinians?

[Sha'th] If such results are final, this means that the Israeli prime minister, who has been our peace partner since the Oslo agreement and who, along with the former prime minister, Rabin, signed this agreement with us, will continue to carry out the responsibilities of implementing what he signed and to continue the peace process in accordance with the text of the agreement in whose drafting he was the primary partner. This means that Peres has to pay many dues in order to implement what was agreed upon and to negotiate things that have not been negotiated yet.

[Al-Barqawi] Therefore, the results of the elections will affect the final status negotiations.

[Sha'th] Undoubtedly, this is true. I do not think they will be easy, by the way. Peres is not the Palestinian people's choice but there is a choice between Peres and Netanyahu, whom judging by his statements and behavior and that of his predecessor Mr. Shamir, whose words are still fresh in our memory—if it takes me 10 years negotiating with the Palestinians, I will not reach any results with them—we are forced to say that the result, which partially came about due to the Palestinian Arab voters in Israel, is a better choice than other available choices.

[Al-Barqawi] The Arab vote has been decisive. More than 77 percent of the Arabs within the Green Line voted. Perhaps more than 11 will enter the Knesset. This is the first time. Does this mean much for the Palestinian Arabs?

[Sha'th] I hope so. I hope that Peres will consider that he is indebted to the Israeli Arab voter, that he should respond to these voters' aspirations for genuine, just peace for the Palestinian people, that he will behave in a way commensurate with these results which would not have been reached without these voters.

[Al-Barqawi] The Likud bloc lodged a protest with the election central committee charging that the Voice of Palestine urged the Palestinian Arabs within the Green Line to vote for Peres.

[Sha'th] We did not interfere and we did not play a role from the outside. We did not instigate anybody. We only spoke about the dues that the peace process requires from any winning Israeli. In fact we were perfectly committed to principles. It is not our problem, it is Mr. Netanyahu's problem.

[Al-Barqawi] Then do we expect the final status negotiations to start soon, Dr. Sha'th?

[Sha'th] We hope so. I do not think that Peres will find difficulties in forming a government. If we consider the Russian Knesset members, he will be able to form a government soon.

[Al-Barqawi] During the election campaign, peres made remarks on Jerusalem. Do you believe that his remarks were designed to serve the election campaign or will he continue to adhere to these statements that will make negotiations difficult?

[Sha'th] I hope I will not be pessimistic on this point. I believe that we will face difficulties in negotiating with Mr. Peres on the Jerusalem issue. He is not easy. If we want to be objective we must say that negotiations with Peres will be difficult but it will be more difficult with Netanyahu. The question is between the difficult and the more difficult and not between the easy and difficult. We must adhere to our real, just stands which are protected by Resolution 242, the basis of the final settlement. It will not be an easy task. I hope that none of our Palestinian listeners think that Peres' election will make things easier. However, Netanyahu's election would make things much more difficult.

[Al-Barqawi] We the Palestinians must persevere and remain strong. We have dealt with the Israelis for many years, Dr. Sha'th.

[Sha'th] May God help us in the coming days.

[Al-Barqawi] Thank you, Dr. Sha'th.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Zayidah Foresees Peace Process 'Complications'

TA3005110996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0935 GMT 30 May 96

[Telephone interview with Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, head of the PA's Israel desk, by correspondents Avri Gil'ad and Qobi Meydan — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Gil'ad] What will happen to the Israel-PA [Palestinian Authority] relations as of today?

[Abu-Zayidah] I think that if the election results are final, the ball will now be in the Israeli, not the Palestinian, court.

[Meydan] You could have anticipated the nature of this so-called ball throughout the election campaign. The remarks Refa'el Eytan made on our program this morning — that certain Oslo agreement articles contravening Israel's national and existential interests

will have to be reopened — were made by him during the election campaign.

[Abu-Zayidah] What are we expected to do with certain clauses that contravene the Palestinian national interests?

[Meydan] Eytan would probably say: Let us reopen the whole thing.

[Abu-Zayidah] Do we, too, have a right to reopen the agreements? If that is the situation, there will be no problems. Look, if Israel has reservations about the Oslo accords, we have 10 times as many. No agreement has ever divided the Palestinian nation as much as this one did, but the difference between the Palestinians and the Israelis is that in the Palestinian elections four months ago the Palestinians voted for peace with Israel, electing Yasir 'Arafat and a council 70 percent of which is pro-peace.

[Gil'ad] But the other part of the Palestinian nation continued to carry out operations that, some say, caused the Israeli elections to end as they have.

[Abu-Zayidah] I am not certain of that. I do not ignore the fact that terrorist acts carried out by fools from our midst helped bring the Likud to power, but there were other reasons that had nothing to do with the Palestinians.

[A report on Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0830 GMT on 30 May adds: "Reacting to the results of the Israeli election results, Sufyan Abu-Zayidah said the PA would not woo any Likud leader. In his opinion, the peace process is now certain to encounter complications and delays."]

Palestinian Affairs: PA Official Warns Against Reopening Oslo Accords

TA3005111496 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1000 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has so far avoided issuing an official reaction to the recent events. PA official Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq reacted to Knesset Member Eytan's remarks regarding the need to reopen the Oslo accords, warning that this may lead to the worst possible situation:

[Begin 'Abd-al-Raziq recording] Whoever thinks he can disclaim the Oslo accords should know that he will bring about a worse situation. The peace process inherent in the Oslo accords is good for both nations, while those who want to return to the circle of bloodshed should realize that this is bad for both nations. [end recording]

In the territories, however, people still believe that when the final results are reported it will transpire that Peres has won the premiership elections.

Palestinian Affairs: Security Official on Israeli Elections, 'Arafat's Health

LD2905194996 Rome RAI Radio Uno Network in Italian 1700 GMT 29 May 96

[Interview with Palestinian security official Jibril al-Rujub by Riccardo Cristiano; place and date not given — recorded; al-Rujub speaks in English with superimposed translation into Italian]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Cristiano] This is the much-feared Jibril al-Rujub, the only Palestinian, it is said, who can say no to Yasir 'Arafat. He is the best man to ask whether, if Binyamin Netanyahu wins, a new Palestinian uprising could be possible.

[Al-Rujub] We must not interfere with internal Israeli matters; I will only say that we have signed an agreement with the state of Israel, and we believe that they will respect it as we do. Certainly, if from the vote there emerge political choices and indications that are in contradiction with the peace agreements, everything, I say everything, will be open to question.

[Cristiano] Can we be more precise? Netanyahu says that if he wins, he will build new Israeli colonies on the West Bank. Is that compatible with the peace process?

[Al-Rujub] We accepted the interim agreement, we accepted a gradual political process with a promise that in the end we would achieve our independence in the West Bank and Gaza. In order to create the Palestinian state, it is necessary that all traces of the Israeli occupation of our lands disappear, not just that it does not increase.

[Cristiano] What is 'Arafat's state of health?

[Al-Rujub] The chairman is in good health. He was a bit ill two weeks ago, but all the reports I have heard are unfounded. 'Arafat, I believe, is in better health than you or me.

Palestinian Affairs: Agreements Binding Regardless of Israeli Election Results

TA2905154496 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 29 May 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Palestinian Reactions to the Israeli Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli elections for the Knesset are taking place today. Preparations for these elections began at least five months ago: namely, following the decision to advance the election date after

the leadership of the ruling coalition in Israel felt that as a result of the assassination of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Israeli public opinion began shifting markedly in favor of the Labor Party. This, as a result of the feeling of revenge that pervaded the Israeli street against the extremists who harassed Rabin so much with their taunts until it culminated in the assassination. This shift was the reason for the rush by Shim'on Peres, Rabin's successor, to advance the election date.

The suicide bombing operations that took place in some Israeli cities, however, produced a backlash among Israelis. Peres' government used these acts as a pretext to clamp a tight siege on the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This siege has continued for an entire three months. Presumably it will be lifted, since the aim behind it was to ensure a certain degree of stability in the Israeli public's political inclinations, and because closure, siege, and cordons have not been at all effective in preventing the intrusion or "infiltration" of Palestinians into the so-called Green Line. To date, the Palestinians have suffered enough from this oppressive siege.

Despite the fact that the elections are an internal Israeli affair, their results and repercussions will have a decisive impact on the situation on the Israeli, Palestinian, and Arab levels. This is because proceeding with the peace process or freezing and putting it on hold is the issue before the Israeli voter, bearing in mind that the peace agreements were not signed with this or that party but with the Israeli Government. From this aspect, those agreements are binding on subsequent Israeli Governments regardless of the party that forms them.

Irrespective of which party wins today's elections — with opinion polls showing a shrinking lead separating the two major parties and their leaders — the justness of the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian people's insistence on realizing their legitimate national aspirations, and the Arab nation's and international community's support for the Palestinian people's just struggle through the peace process attest that the priority will not be set by external elements at all, such as the Israeli or other elections, but by Palestinian efforts backed on the Arab and international levels. Sooner or later, these efforts will achieve those just aspirations regardless of who heads the Israeli Government.

**Palestinian Affairs: Radio Commentary Hopes
Israelis Will Opt for Peace**

JN2905160196 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1110 GMT 29 May 96

[Political commentary by Yusuf al-Qazzaz from "Today's Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli elections got under way today. We, the Palestinians, view these elections as observers who just watch and wait without direct or indirect interference in the Israeli people's choice. Today, the Israeli people will say: This is the prime minister of Israel and those are the people who will represent us in the Knesset.

We, the Palestinians, here in our country and in the diaspora, hope that the Israelis will say yes for peace, yes for halting violence, and yes for the Palestinians as a people who have the right to establish their Palestinian state, with its Palestinian capital, Jerusalem.

Since the creation of Israel, our Palestinian people have suffered a great deal. They have suffered much more than any other nation on earth. The Palestinian people have suffered from oppression, arbitrariness, suppression, terrorism, siege, and jail. They have suffered massacres and paid a very heavy price — their land, sons, and life — to win their freedom and independence.

When we chose peace as a strategic concept, we chose the future and life. We chose the future for our Palestinian people and our partner in the peace process, the people of Israel. The Palestinian people chose to remove all causes of bloodshed to light the path for the coming Palestinian generations so they can live in a free, sovereign home named Palestine, which is an independent state, with Palestinian Jerusalem as its capital. The Palestinian people also did that to light the path for all the peoples of the region to live within the borders of their entities and to move from the state of war to a life of peace.

We say again: We are waiting for the Israeli people to give their final word. We are waiting, along with others, for the Israeli people's historic stand, to say yes for peace or yes for war. Peace is the zenith of the values of civilization and life and is a strategic option for us, the Palestinians. It is our great hope that peace will also be Israel's strategic option.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat's Wife Denies Yasir's
Health Suffering**

BR2905133596 *Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA*
in Italian 25 May 96 p 9

[Telephone interview with Suha 'Arafat, wife of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, in Paris, by Antonio Ferrari in Jerusalem; date not given: "My Yasir? A 60-Year Old Tough Guy"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ferrari] Well, Mrs. 'Arafat, tell us how your husband is. Some people say he is seriously ill.

['Arafat] Look, I have been here in my mother's house in France with my daughter for two weeks. Do you really think that I would be here, and not at my husband's side, if he were sick? The truth is quite simple. People cannot get used to the idea that 'Arafat can catch a common cold. They think he is Superman. If anything, his problem is that he leads a frenetic life and cannot manage to switch off. He gets very little sleep, and at times I have to force him to take an hour's rest. Yasir is over 60: He is not 30 any more. He has had a life of trials and tribulations, a serious plane crash — what I mean is he should be looking after himself, but my insistence on his taking care of himself often falls on deaf ears. As you know, he is a brave man, strong, a tough guy. He even refuses to take an aspirin if he has a headache. And I worry.

[Ferrari] All the same, this time it looked more serious than a mere cold.

['Arafat] He has a cold and is running a slight temperature. It is not the first time. Do you remember two years ago, just before he returned to Gaza? Same influenza, same rumors. So....

[Ferrari] Nevertheless, he had a nasty turn in Cairo.

['Arafat] Maybe I was the one, indirectly, who stirred matters up. In fact I called Fathi, Yasir's brother, who runs a hospital in the Egyptian capital, because I wanted my husband to have a complete checkup. That was all there was to it.

[Ferrari] You deny that he has heart, lung, or circulatory problems.

['Arafat] Absolutely. Do you really think a sick man would have gone on an official visit to Greece and then set off for Oman as soon as he got back home? Come on!

[Ferrari] Nevertheless, there is something that has puzzled people: the appointment of Mahmud Abbas, alias Abu-Mazan, as Palestinian second in command, in other words as your husband's deputy. Does it not strike

you that the timing of his appointment might appear suspect, to say the least?

[Arafat] Surani had to be replaced, and he was replaced by Abu-Mazan in recognition of the extremely important role that he performed in Oslo. So formally, no second in command has been chosen.

[Ferrari] So you think that the source of these rumors is, so to speak, obscure, in other words that someone has been trying to take advantage of the situation, maybe the Israeli Right, to dent Arafat's image by making him out to be a peace partner "on sick leave."

[Arafat] I do not want to accuse anyone. Of course, the rumors may have been put about by someone who has an interest in tarnishing my husband's image and destroying the hopes of the Palestinian people.

[Ferrari] Where will you be on the evening of Wednesday 29 May, election day in Israel?

[Arafat] In front of the television, like everyone else.

[Ferrari] What do you expect? What does your intuition tell you?

[Arafat] It is a matter of logic, not intuition. It is not question of rooting for a particular side. Of course, we have known Shim'on Peres for three years now, and we have covered a good stretch of the road to peace. So we know each other very well, and, as is always the case, you feel more at ease with the people you know best. It goes without saying.

[Ferrari] And what if Binyamin Netanyahu's Likud were to win?

[Arafat] Of course, difficulties might arise.

[Ferrari] Great enough to put paid to the peace process?

[Arafat] No, the peace will not be halted, even if Netanyahu were to win.

Palestinian Affairs: Article on 'Arafat's 'Sudden Health Crisis' in Cairo

NC2905161896 *Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic*
20 May 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian President Yasir Arafat suffered a sudden health crisis during his recent visit to Cairo. He fell unconscious after a news conference he held with President Mubarak and King Husayn. A news blackout was imposed on this crisis, which lasted six whole hours during which all of Arafat's meetings and engagements were canceled.

At 1200, the cars of the bodyguards of Palestinian President Yasir Arafat stopped in front of Palestine International Hospital in Cairo. The bodyguards announced

that Arafat was inside the hospital. His sister In'am, who has been in the hospital for several months suffering from a broken leg, was waiting for him. In fact, President Arafat was at that time at the al-Jala' Military Hospital receiving first aid and undergoing medical tests under complete secrecy. He was later received by his brother Dr. Fathi Arafat, who was immediately summoned from Paris to follow up on his condition.

Sources pointed out to ROSE AL-YUSUF editors Hamdi al-Husayni and Rida al-Karadawi that what happened to Arafat was not a surprise, at least not for his closest aides. Even during the medical tests at the al-Jala' Hospital, he was about to lose consciousness another time. The doctors anesthetized him for one hour and then resume the medical tests.

Arafat left the hospital and slept all night at the al-Andalus Palace, under Egyptian guard. His bodyguards, who spent the night in a hotel close to the palace, said Arafat had influenza and was resting.

Arafat arrived in Gaza at noon the following day. Some newspapers reported that Arafat had extended his visit to Cairo for two more days. Meanwhile, his brother Fathi Arafat was checking the doctors' reports, which indicated that Yasir Arafat was suffering from low blood pressure, low blood sugar, and irregular blood circulation as a result of psychological and physical strain.

Palestinian Affairs: Fatah Document on Amendment of Covenant

TA2605145496 (*Internet*) IRIS News Update
in English 21 May 96

[From the "Our Opinion: Fatah Publication No. 8, 32nd year, second half of April 1996": "The Palestinian National Covenant — Between Renewal and Being Frozen"—received via fax]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After an enforced adjournment of five years, the Palestine National Council (PNC) has been renewed in our homeland, under the Palestinian Authority [PA], while emphasizing that our movement, Fatah, adheres to its national revolutionary line and its stubbornness regarding its leadership role in the struggle, as accepted by all the bodies and institutions of the PLO. Despite the repeated requests of the Israeli side directed to our brother Abu-'Ammar (Yasir Arafat) to fulfill his obligation and bring the necessary changes in the Palestinian Covenant before the PNC, the convening of the PNC is a Palestinian necessity, since the ongoing adjournment of the PNC would in effect mean the death of the bodies and institutions of the PLO. Such a situation would be in accordance with the goals of the

Zionist movement to link the permanent status solution solely with the Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza.

The Israeli leadership wanted the PNC to convene for the sole purpose of changing the Covenant and nullifying the articles which call for the destruction of Israel, but these are the very same articles which call for the liberation of Palestine so that nullifying these articles would nullify the purpose for which the PLO was created. From a Zionist and Israeli perspective, the demand was to issue a death certificate to the PNC and for the PLO to commit suicide.

The central committee of the PLO understood the danger inherent in the Zionist trap and was driven by the will to preserve the Palestine Liberation Organization and its objectives. The invitation to the 21st session of the PNC included a comprehensive agenda that did not directly include the subject of the Covenant and its amendment, which is a matter that requires a special session for this purpose under the terms of Article 33 of the Palestinian National Covenant. The agenda did include the subject of legal amendments, an item under whose framework it is possible to raise the subject of amending the Covenant and to ask the Executive Committee to conduct a special convention for this purpose.

The contradiction was clear from the very first meeting of the Council. A large number of members did not attend, including members of the Fatah Central Committee and members of the PLO Executive Committee, for a number of reasons: in part because of the location, and in part because of the timing, which could have been understood as though we were granting an electoral asset to the Labor Party and to Peres, even after all the crimes that were committed such as the separation and the closure and the starvation and the denial of obligations and the wild attacks drenched in blood against the Lebanese nation. Some members were absent because of their ideological opposition to the entire process of reconciliation.

There were also varied reasons for the attendance of many members, especially among the factions opposing the Oslo process, such as the Popular Front and the Democratic Front and the General Command. The return to the homeland and receiving Palestinian citizenship was the most important reason. The opportunity, which will not repeat itself, to fulfill the right of return took place in the shadow of Israel's stubbornness and refusal to permit the return of the freedom fighters who led the Western Sector. The PNC leadership conditioned the convening of the Council upon the return of all its members without exception, in addition to a number of

observers, including those whose return was prevented for security reasons by the Israeli logic. The number of those who returned was more than 450 freedom fighters.

The contradiction was made even clearer once the speeches began and the positions of members and their organizations were clarified, and what stood out especially was the saying "we told you so," with the remnants of the Marxists exploiting the deteriorated condition of our nation to declare war on those who termed them "nationalists" who rebelled against the Palestinian National Covenant. A number of speakers did not demand the amendment of the Covenant, but rather sought a denial of its existence since they saw in it an insult to the history of the Palestinian struggle. In contrast to this position, members of opposition groups and members of our movement, Fatah, felt that the Covenant is one of the achievements and results of the armed struggle which our movement led, especially after the eternal battle of al-Karamah, in whose wake our Fatah movement together with the other fighting Palestinian organizations received the responsibility of leadership over the PLO and carried out the required changes to the national Covenant [in 1968] in order that it should suit the new conditions created by the Israeli aggression in June 1967.

Most of the members of our nation, and among them most members of the Central Committee, knew well the meaning of the commitment which was being demanded of the organization as a result of the obligation which brother Abu-'Ammar signed in the exchange of letters with Yitzhaq Rabin in the agreement on mutual recognition, an agreement which put our organization on the map of direct negotiations with Israel. At this stage, three different approaches stood out in the organization:

The first approach — its proponents opposed any change, amendment or cancellation of any of the articles of the Covenant before the Israeli side implements its obligations which stem from the agreement on mutual recognition. The chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization signed a document containing an obligation according to which "those articles of the Palestinian covenant which deny Israel's right to exist, and the provisions of the Covenant which are inconsistent with the commitments of this letter are now inoperative and no longer valid. Consequently, the PLO undertakes to submit to the Palestinian National Council for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian Covenant."

This obligation was given to the Israeli government in exchange for the decision of the government of Israel "to recognize the PLO as the representative of the

Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East Peace process." Under this approach, the legal meaning of mutual recognition between governments, state and institutions of the international community is not only a procedural political issue, but an important legal action which is understood by international law as one of the basic criteria for being accepted as a legitimate government or state. The PLO, even though it is a liberation movement, is different from many liberation movements, because it is a body which is closer to a government. In its constitution and its basic structure it has founded varying bodies, and more importantly, it has established its international relations within a broad framework with governments, states and international organizations, and has merited the general recognition of being the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This process reached its apogee in UN General Assembly Resolution 3236 of November 1994, which reaffirmed the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, independence, and national sovereignty. These are matters which the Israeli recognition of the PLO must include for the simple fact that they do not contradict living in peace in the region and do not call for the destruction of Israel together with the right of the Palestinian people to establish a state. This approach conditioned the implementation of the interim agreement on Israel's complying with its obligations, especially with respect to safe passage, the return of refugees, the release of prisoners and an end to the confiscation of land and the Judaization of Jerusalem and the expansion of the settlements, before anyone could enter into the details of changing the articles of the Covenant.

The second approach: This approach held that the obligation should be fulfilled and implemented out of the need to continue with the peace process, without any connection to Israel's compliance or non-compliance with the agreements. This approach called for denying the Peres government any excuse to renege on its commitments. Supporters of this approach thought that fulfilling the commitment at the present time would give Peres momentum carrying him to victory in the coming elections, because in their eyes he is the one most capable of continuing the process in a peaceful way. In their opinion, disaster would strike the process if Peres fails and Netanyahu succeeds.

The third approach: Even though the proponents of this approach knew that they must not abandon brother Abu-'Ammar, who took the historical gamble in order to establish the Palestinian existence in the homeland, and who signed on the commitments in his capacity as Chairman of the PLO, they feared the danger in

unilaterally complying with obligations and the ever-present danger of Israel fleeing from its obligations under the slogan of "there are no sacred dates" and abandoning the agreements with the PLO. Proponents of this approach stressed the need of the Palestinian National Council to remain firm in its obligations to the Palestinian people, which it represents, and which decided to deviate from the clauses of the Palestinian National Covenant in 1988 with the promulgation of the National Declaration of Independence and the establishment of the State of Palestine. Supporters of this approach felt that effort should be invested in the framework of the negotiations to reach a text of a decision that would grapple with the evil and corrupt acts which are expected from the Israeli side. If a death warrant is issued for the Palestinian Covenant in the manner in which the Israelis want — namely, annulment of the articles and amending before the beginning of the final status talks — then instead of addressing the necessary changes to the Covenant in the framework of a special session, the inclination was to obtain the approval of the PNC in a regular session, to undertake to amend the Covenant and to authorize the Legal Committee to redraft the National Covenant and to present it before the Central Committee at its first meeting.

The text of the Palestinian National Covenant remains as it was and no changes whatsoever were made to it. This has caused it to be frozen but not annulled. The drafting of the new National Covenant will take into account the extent of Israeli fulfillment of its previous and coming obligations, and the extent of the commitment of the Israeli Prime Minister that will be elected at the end of May. The expectation of Peres' return, and the possibility that Netanyahu will win, mean that in any event the text of the Covenant will reflect the adherence of the Government of Israel to its obligations and to the peace process. And this matter is riddled with doubt.

The PNC thus decided on the continuation of the historical gamble and its guarantee under a national, Islamic and international security ring in the following manner:

"The Palestinian National Council, meeting in its 21st session, basing itself upon the Declaration of Independence and the political declaration of its 19th session at Algiers on 15 November 1988 which confirmed the principle of peaceful resolution of the conflict through a two-state solution, and basing itself upon the introduction to the Declaration of Principles which was signed in Washington in 1993, which confirmed the agreement of the two sides that the time had arrived to end generations of conflict and which recognized the mutual po-

litical and legal rights to exist in peace and honor and mutual security and to achieve a just and lasting peace, and basing itself upon international law as expressed in the UN decisions 242 and 338 concerning Palestine, the Palestinian National Council confirms the PLO's commitment to the Declaration of Principles and to the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 agreements and their annexes and the principles upon which were based the Madrid Conference and the negotiations in Washington. Therefore, the Council decides to change the Palestinian Covenant via canceling the articles which contradict the letters that were exchanged between the PLO and the Government of Israel on 9-10 September 1993. Second, the PNC authorizes the Legal Committee to redraft the Palestinian Covenant which shall be placed before the Central Committee at its first meeting."

The text of this decision, by affirming the Declaration of Independence as a basis for the drafting the new National Covenant, achieved a Palestinian security guarantee since it (the Declaration of Independence) had merited nearly unanimous national consensus in the Council's chambers in Algiers on the day of the passage of the decision (in 1988) and among the Palestinian people in all its various places of residence. Similarly, by basing itself upon the legitimate foundations of international law, it also achieved an international security guarantee, in a manner that will guarantee that the process in the future will be in accordance with international law, which establishes that the settlements are

illegal and that occupied Jerusalem is Palestinian land and part of the independent Palestinian state. Similarly it affirms the legitimate international decisions regarding the right of return for refugees. These subjects will have an important place in the drafting of the Palestinian Covenant, which serves as a continuation of the process of struggle which our movement undertook since founding the outlines of the revolution, its message, its principles, its goals and means of action, along with the decisions of its fifth convention, which affirmed the Declaration of Independence and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. The fact that the PNC did not hold a special session in order to carry out changes and amendments to the text of the National Covenant at this stage, and the fact that a new Covenant has not been prepared, given the psychological pressures, the closure and other Zionist actions, serves to protect the new Covenant from being influenced by the present Israeli tyranny.

The horizons of the future remain open to our movement and our organization in order to continually accumulate new achievements, small as they may be, and in order to overcome the objective and specific problems, so that our new Covenant will accurately reflect the constitution of our independent Palestinian state whose capital is Jerusalem.

Revolution Until Victory

Algeria

Algeria: 'Disagreements' Within GIA Led to Killing of Monks

MM3005102696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
29 May 96 pp 1,6

[Unattributed report: "Disagreements Within the 'Group' Led to the Killing of the French Monks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — Western diplomatic sources in London told AL-HAYAH that disagreements within the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) hastened the killing of the seven French monks kidnapped in Algeria.

The sources revealed yesterday that the monks were initially kidnapped because of suspicions that they were giving support to the Islamic Salvation Army, affiliated to the Islamic Salvation Front, on the orders of Djemal Zitouni, the GIA leader, and that disagreements within the GIA emerged after the kidnapping. These disagreements centered around two points:

1. The principle of exchanging the monks. Zitouni was refusing to exchange them on the pretext that they were French "agents," while others believed that it was necessary to carry out such an exchange.
2. The principle of the legitimacy of kidnapping religious men: This disagreement led Zitouni to execute the monks at the end of last April to avoid escalation. His rationale for the kidnapping was that those targeted are "foreign agents and spies."

The sources said that the disagreements within the GIA precluded any talk about negotiations for the release of the monks, because the kidnappers did not really intend to negotiate for the release of the monks, whose fate was decided within 10 days of the kidnapping.

The sources said that the GIA intends to issue statements which will include a translation or a copy of a receipt from the French Embassy in Algiers, confirming that it had received an audio cassette. This receipt, which bears the embassy's stamp and which the GIA messenger insisted on obtaining, is no more than a receipt for delivery. The messenger's insistence on obtaining a receipt bearing the embassy's stamp has raised many doubts among French organs.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak, al-Qadhdhafi Hold News Conference

NC2905135096 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio
Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 29 May 96

[News Conference by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Libyan leader Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi

with unidentified correspondents in Cairo on 29 May—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mubarak] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I welcome Brother Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi. In the past few days we have held several meetings. The brother colonel has visited several sites. He has held meetings with intellectuals, journalists, and industrialists. We have discussed bilateral relations. I believe there is constant progress in bilateral relations. We have discussed some international topics of interest to the region and to us. Again I welcome Brother Leader Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] I express my gratitude for what we have achieved during our brotherly meetings. I thank the Egyptian people of all walks of life, above all the president, for their firm support for Libya's stance and for Libya's wise and sound policy. This policy helps safeguard the Libyan people's rights and dignity and marshal the ranks of the Arab nation. This policy enjoys the support of all peoples. We have positive achievements on several important Arab and international issues.

I hope our joint efforts will continue and double so we can achieve the desired results for our backward countries, which are seeking progress and advancement and so we can contribute to solving world crises. It is not in our interest for the world to remain tense. As small, poor, and backward peoples, we strive to eliminate poverty, ignorance, sickness. It is not in our interest for the world to have economic problems, wars, and tensions in international relations. We want to live in a world of peace, cooperation, free trade, peaceful and friendly relations, and tourism.

War, terrorism, violence, and tension are against tourism. Tourism is a source of income for our countries, including Egypt. Even Libya is trying to become a tourist destination in the future. Tunisia lives solely on tourism. Therefore, tourism is a main source of income for the small countries, especially in the Mediterranean. Tourism requires a climate of peace, reassurance, and security; we are keen on these matters. We have agreed to contribute to creating a better world. The brother president and the Egyptian people have expressed support for their brothers, the Libyan people. I thank them for their warm welcome and hospitality.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, in accordance with Arab consensus on this matter, Libya will not sign the agreement banning the proliferation of chemical weapons unless Israel signs the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. Nevertheless, Libya has backed President Hosni Mubarak's initiative to clear the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction. However,

we recently heard allegations that Libya is seeking to build a chemical weapons plant in Tarhuna that will be capable of producing such weapons within two years. What are the facts concerning these allegations? What is your position on President Mubarak's proposal to invite a team of international inspectors....

[Mubarak, interrupts] I did not say "inspectors."

[Correspondent] Observers?

[Mubarak] No, I said it would be an invitation to any group....

[Correspondent, interrupting] Any party or group to visit this site? Thank you.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] First of all, Libya did not sign the agreement banning chemical weapons in support of the Egyptian stance. Egypt and Syria refused to sign this agreement. Libya backed this Egyptian-Syrian position. The origins of this Egyptian-Syrian position are well-known. It's because the Israelis possess a nuclear arsenal, a fact known to the whole world. They also possess chemical and biological weapons. They do not subject their installations to inspection and have no international or U.S. pressures imposed on them. They have not signed the NPT. Hence, the Egyptian-Syrian position is sound and Libya has backed it. As to nuclear weapons, Libya—and I believe Egypt also—is an NPT signatory. Our nuclear power plants, intended for peaceful purposes, are subject to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] every six months. Despite all this, they keep leveling accusations against us. Then why should we... [pauses] Regrettably, we have accepted the treaty and are subject to inspections and still we face constant accusations. What's the use of inspections and our accepting the treaty, if we face constant accusations that we might be building a nuclear bomb. Our nuclear plants are subject to IAEA inspections. As to Tarhuna, I think that what the president told foreign journalists yesterday is enough. He said he sent a mission from Egypt to visit Tarhuna, viewed the tunnel, photographed the tunnel, and found nothing. I don't think that after the Egyptian and the president's personal testimony the United States or anybody else can say that Tarhuna houses a chemical weapons plant. Doesn't Egypt have any credibility? Egypt is trusted on much more delicate, much more important matters than the Tarhuna issue. It is a partner to the Middle East peace process and a party to the peace and security partnership. Egypt is an ally, a friend, and a partner of these countries [not further identified]. I don't think that Egypt's or President Husni's public testimony can be taken lightly. I don't think so.

[Mubarak, laughs] We can find another witness if they want.

[Al-Qadhdhafi, laughs] Yes, we can find another witness.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency President Mubarak: In a statement to the FINANCIAL TIMES, you stressed that statements and proposals by Israeli leaders concerning the future of Jerusalem will cause many problems in the future. How do you expect the Jerusalem issue to be solved, and what Arab and international efforts are being made in this regard?

[Mubarak] As regards Jerusalem — and we have discussed that many times, most recently in the FINANCIAL TIMES — the problem cannot be solved unilaterally. Jerusalem has Islamic, Christian, and Jewish holy places. Secondly, we said in all the opinions and agreements that the issue of Jerusalem will be resolved through negotiations. The United States has said the future of Jerusalem is subject to negotiation. We are saying no more than that. The Palestinians and the Israelis must hold negotiations and reach a solution acceptable to the parties. There are many Islamic, Christian, and Israeli holy sites in Jerusalem. Those who say Jerusalem is the eternal capital [of Israel] are perhaps saying this for local consumption. We should not heed election-related statements. But negotiations must be held to determine the future of Jerusalem, especially the religious sites.

[Correspondent] This is a question for both presidents: Are there any proposals to resolve the Lockerbie crisis, and are there any indications that the embargo against Libya will be lifted?

[Mubarak] The Lockerbie problem has dragged on too long. We are doing our utmost to solve the problem. But I believe that under the current circumstances, with the elections [in the United States], it is difficult to reach a solution, but I hope that after the U.S. elections we will be able to engage in new efforts to hopefully reach a solution acceptable to all parties.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Excuse me. I have a short comment here. It is surprising that some U.S. circles view solving the Lockerbie crisis as harmful to a candidate for the presidency. Why should a solution to the Lockerbie problem not be a winning card for a U.S. candidate? If this candidate succeeds in bringing the suspects to trial and justice, he will be meeting the demands of the families of the victims. It will be to his credit to bring the truth out, to let the judiciary decide whether the act was perpetrated by the Libyans or not. If the two Libyans are convicted and compensation awarded, then a demand by the families of the victims will have been met. In this case, the candidate will have brought the facts out and got compensation for those families. At any rate, I am surprised that the candidates can avoid the Lockerbie issue during the elections. In contrast, finding a peaceful

solution to the Lockerbie crisis and reaching a verdict condemning or acquitting the Libyans and compensating the Americans, for example, will serve as a winning card in the hand of the U.S. candidate.

[Mubarak] But it is also a political-economic card, Brother Colonel. [laughter]

[Correspondent] Mr. Colonel, the Palestinian issue is passing through a delicate phase. What is your stance on the expulsion of Palestinians from Libya? Is there any change in Libya's stance in this regard?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] We are not expelling them, we are sending them closer to their homes. If we move them from Libya in the direction of Palestine, I believe we are moving them closer to their homes for their eventual return there. Ask those who expelled them in 1948 and 1967. They expelled them from their homes in Palestine. Libya must be appreciated by all peoples and forces that are working for solving the Palestinian issue. Libya is contributing toward solving this problem. On the contrary, by its action Libya has believed all it has heard. We have believed that the Palestinian issue has been solved. Must the Palestinians in Libya remain refugees forever? We have told them that the issue has been solved. Thank God, the U.S. President solved the issue. Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] solved the issue. Rabin and Peres solved the issue. You now have an authority, a police force, a flag, a president, and a legislative council. Why are you sitting here? Go and vote in the elections.

Therefore, we must be thanked for our contribution toward solving the Palestinian issue peacefully, and for the peaceful return of the Palestinians to their homes. I urge Syria to allow the Palestinians to return peacefully to Palestine. I urge Lebanon to allow the Palestinians to return peacefully to Palestine. I urge Jordan to allow 1.5 million Palestinians to return peacefully to Palestine. I believe Libya must be thanked for its stance and for peacefully contributing toward solving the Palestinian issue. On the contrary, when the Palestinians remain outside Palestine, they will be exploited by extremist, bloody, and violent leaderships that will form them into armed guerrilla groups. Problems will continue, wars will continue, and guerrilla operations will continue across the borders of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. The Palestinians might create problems for the countries in which they live. Why should we keep them hostage? Why should we keep the Palestinians hostage? The Palestinians must return peacefully to Palestine, holding an olive branch. This is a big contribution on my part and on the part of Libya for solving the problem peacefully. I hope that the Palestinian issue will be solved following the pattern of the solution reached in

South Africa. The black people remained inside their country. They abandoned violence, held elections under UN supervision, and a democratic country of blacks and whites was established. I call for the return of the Palestinians and for holding elections under UN supervision without weapons, without violence, and without war. I call for holding free elections under UN supervision and for establishing a democratic state for the Palestinians and the Jews. I want the Palestinians to contribute toward this solution. For this reason, we do not want to keep them hostage.

[Mubarak] While appreciating the brother colonel's words, I would like to say that the Palestinian issue is not completely settled yet. Therefore I appeal to brother President Mu'ammr al-Qadhdhafi to reconsider his stance on the question of the Palestinians because the present situation will cause new problems, particularly as these Palestinians have no means of livelihood. If they, and also we, send the Palestinians away, I believe that matters will become more complicated. We will actually be making the Palestinian issue more complicated. I believe that the brother colonel will listen to this appeal.

[Correspondent] A similar question for Colonel al-Qadhdhafi. We ask you to keep the Palestinians, who are in hospitable Libya, until a final solution. The Palestinian people will not accept such a solution unless it is in harmony with the hopes and ambitions of (your) Arab nation. Do you have any other view in this respect and could the Palestinians' presence in Libya have a negative impact on the peace process?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] If the Palestinian people are settled outside Palestine, then the problem will not be resolved. One day these people will demand a return to their land. Even if a country agreed to settle them in it, they will be second or third-class citizens and will form a despised minority in that country. This means that the problem is not resolved. It means that we are planting land mines that could explode anytime.

Besides, why are we afraid that they will not be able to return to their land? It is their land and they have the right to return to it. What is not right is their dispersed presence in Libya, Egypt, and Syria. They have the right to return to their land. It is their land to which they must return. Why should we oppose the Palestinians' return to their land? If Palestine [words indistinct] then the problem is not resolved. Let everyone fight for his right.

We believed that a peaceful solution was coming. I am really surprised about the sensitivity of the Palestinians' return to their homes. They have the right to return. Do you want to take their homes and land, take Palestine

and say the Palestinians will have to be settled elsewhere and when they want to return you tell them do not return. Why was there no protest over the Russian Jews who emigrated from Russia?

Is this reasonable? We have the right to Palestine for being there for five thousand years. Have you seen air links from the Volga river to Palestine in past years? They brought in elderly people 100 years of age and one-year-old children who do not even know the Jewish religion. They are Russians who have been Russian for hundreds of years. They said they are originally Jews and have the right to return to Palestine, because Palestine has been theirs for 5,000 thousand years.

Do the Palestinians, who were expelled in 1967 and in 1948, not have the right to return before these Russians? They brought all the tramps, they brought the Falashas. They said that in the days of Nebuchadnezzar or Prophet Muhammad an Israeli tribe was expelled and dispersed in Ethiopia and it has the right to Palestine. Who has precedence? The ones who were expelled in 1948 and 1967 or those expelled in the era of Nebuchadnezzar?

[Correspondent] A question to both President Husni Mubarak and Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi. We watched your visit yesterday to a number of production sites and Egyptian industrial estates in Madinat al-'Ashir Min Ramadan. How do you view the progress of Egyptian industries? What is the possibility of establishing joint Egyptian-Libyan industries and what is the level of economic cooperation between the two countries?

[Al-Qadhafi] Truly I am pleased with what I saw as an Arab, unionist, nonregionalist—Let us get rid of regionalism for good. I admired and am very happy for the accomplishments made on Egyptian soil at the hands of President Husni Mubarak (?personally). This is a testimony in favor of the Egyptian people, who were blessed by the presence of President Husni Mubarak in this period of time with his vitality, energy, ability, and sincerity. This is despite his involvement in global problems, because his help is sought in these matters. Yet he is engaged in building the infrastructure of Egypt horizontally and vertically.

Egypt is really a beehive of building activity and is having an industrial revival. I believe it is also having an agricultural revival. I have not closely inspected the agricultural sector, but I did see irrigation canals extending from the Nile in the direction of the desert and Sinai. The former so-called desert road between Cairo and Alexandria is now an agricultural road. The irrigation canals have reached it. There is now a search for underground water, something formerly neglected in Egypt when people relied entirely on the Nile. There

is an economic revival. Some people have fears that the country might turn into an exploitative capitalist system, but the president assured me during our discussions that the existing companies are shareholding companies governed by laws that ban the rise of exploitative capitalism. You know of course that the rise of capitalism will cause problems, social upheavals, class struggle, et cetera. Our history has taught us a lot about these matters. We will certainly avoid similar problems in the future. The president assures me that not one individual owns a whole factory or company. This is good. It means that all the people who have some money, can borrow some money, or can raise some money somehow are assured that they can start businesses to benefit their families, friends, or a group of shareholders. This is great. It is important for the whole Arab nation. We want Egypt to be a strong country, a giant. I actually consider Cairo the Arab nation's capital. We congratulate Egypt and the Egyptian people on this tremendous activity in the fields of reconstruction by the hands of President Husni Mubarak. I hope that God will give him health, that he will continue to be energetic, and that the Arab nation will benefit from his capabilities and contributions.

[Correspondent] In light of recent developments, what steps have been made to bring the goal of Arab reconciliation closer?

[Mubarak] The Arab problem has been complicated since Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. As I remember, in May 1990, months before the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait, we were just about to reach agreement on arranging annual Arab summits that would meet in November every year. The only unresolved problem at that time was the problem between Iraq and Syria. However, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait upset all our plans for Arab cooperation and confused everything. It was not possible for the summit to meet in November after what happened and after the Arab world split into several groups, some with, some against, and some adopting a neutral stance. The countries that were affected by Kuwait's occupation suffered many wounds. These wounds need time to heal. We began trying to bring the different points of view closer among the countries who had disputes with each other. We have succeeded in eliminating some of the disagreements. The way is still long. We are still making efforts and perhaps we will at least achieve some Arab cooperation. The world is changing and is full of major blocs. If the Arab world remains divided, as it is now, it will be lost in the competition against the major blocs in America, Europe, Asia, and other regions.

[Correspondent] A three-way summit between Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine will be held in Amman next week.

What is the agenda of this summit, and will it help advance the peace process under the shadow of the Israeli elections?

[Mubarak] You know that the three sides met here to solve some problems concerning the peace issue. The summit is not an alliance against anyone; I want to be clear here so that news agencies will not distort the issue. We are absolutely not engaged in axes. We are only trying to bring viewpoints closer, to help advance the peace process, and to solve the Palestine question, which still needs a long time before it reaches final solution. The upcoming summit falls in the same context: advancing and helping the peace process without wasting Palestinian rights. The Israeli elections are being held today. Our summit will be held after the elections. We will see how the situation and the circumstances will be; we will see what will happen and how things will proceed.

[Correspondent] What does your excellency think will happen to the peace process if the Likud Party wins the elections — you know Netanyahu's hardline positions?

[Mubarak] We dealt with the Likud in the past. We signed a peace agreement with Menahem Begin. But after that, we dealt with Rabin and Peres. We understood the mentality of the two and felt they had flexibility to solve the problem. Peace is a common objective for us and the Israelis; it is not only an Arab or an Israeli objective. I do not know Netanyahu; I have not dealt with him. But I know Peres well, and I wholeheartedly hope the Israeli people will elect the one who they think will serve their interests. I do not interfere in their internal affairs. We will deal with the incoming prime minister, whether Peres or Netanyahu, as much as he shows flexibility to solve the problem. If he complicates the issue, like what Mr. Yitzhak Shamir did, the whole situation and the peace process will become worse.

[Correspondent] Your excellency is these days sending messages to Arab leaders east and west. Is Egypt working to close Arab ranks or establish a unified Arab position?

[Mubarak] We discussed this with the brother colonel. We elaborated on the issue of closing Arab ranks. I think we are making big efforts in this respect. We cooperate with our Arab brothers, and we cooperate with the brother colonel, and we discussed that. We cooperate with the brothers in the Gulf, in north Africa, and in Syria. The Syrian president will soon visit us. We discuss all these things, and we hope we will achieve something. But I think our efforts are clear. Thank you.

Egypt: Al-Qadhdhafi Speaks on Lockerbie Affair, Arab Unity

LD2905232996 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2022 GMT 29 May 96

[Address by Libyan leader Mu'ammār al-Qadhdhafi to Foreign Affairs Committees of the Egyptian People's Assembly and Shura Council in Cairo; date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Summary] In a 121-minute recording of al-Qadhdhafi's meeting with members of the Egyptian committees, al-Qadhdhafi praises his audience for being the cream of the Egyptian people.

A member of the Egyptian People's Assembly stands up and says that he is personally convinced that no Libyans were involved in the Lockerbie affair, but he wants al-Qadhdhafi to reassure him. In reply, al-Qadhdhafi discusses British and French occupation of Egypt and Algeria, Italian occupation of Libya, and the reasons why Libya supported former Ugandan President Idi Amin. He tells his audience that Israel is the mafia of the Middle East. He then stresses that Egypt has the right to possess nuclear weapons, because Israel has them. He goes on to give a history of the Lockerbie affair. He also discusses the inconvenience that sanctions are causing those willing to travel from and to Libya, including Libyan pilgrims to the holy land.

Al-Qadhdhafi then shows the audience maps of Libya and Syria, declaring that Libya and Syria are isolated.

Some members of the Egyptian People's Assembly then make statements supporting Libya and denouncing Israeli and U.S. aggression against Libya. They also ask al-Qadhdhafi numerous questions about Arab unity, Libya's efforts to rally Arabs, the current situation in the Arab world, the need to establish an Egyptian-Libyan-Sudanese union, water shortages in the Arab world, current alliances against the Arab world, the Arab common market, occupied Palestine, Zionism, imperialism, and security of the Mediterranean countries.

One People's Assembly member suggests to al-Qadhdhafi the creation of an Arab parliament or cabinet. Al-Qadhdhafi replies that he is ready for immediate union with any Arab country, and that he is not after posts or positions. He reminds his audience of the Libyan system of government, and of the need to go back to the pan-Arab principles and ideas of deceased Egyptian President Nasir. He tells his audience that the Syrian-Egyptian union in 1958 was an emotional one, as unions between neighboring countries should be, such as the one between the two Yemens.

Al-Qadhdhafi goes on to reject the Partnership for Peace as an initiative and creation of NATO and new colonialism.

Egypt: Libya's al-Qadhdhafi Departs Egypt

NC3005081196 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0748 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 May (MENA) — This morning, President Husni Mubarak said goodbye to Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at the Presidential Palace in al-Qubbah at the end of his week-long visit. Col. al-Qadhdhafi shook hands with senior well-wishers, among them Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri; Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif; Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Industry Minister Engineer Sulayman Rida; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs; and Ahmad Wahdan, Egyptian ambassador to Libya. Engineer Sulayman Rida will accompany the great Libyan guest to the al-Sallum border point.

Egypt: Official Comments on Israeli Elections

NC2905213096 Cairo MENA in English
2109 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 29 May (MENA)—First Foreign Undersecretary Ambassador 'Adil al-Safti said that Egypt hopes that the Israeli elections would lead to sidestepping policies motivated by electoral considerations such as the Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

In statements to MENA, Ambassador al-Safti said that Egypt hopes for the resumption of the Middle East peace process as the Israeli people (?opted) for peace.

Egypt: Dailies Comment on Israeli Elections, U.S. Position

NC3005080196 Cairo MENA in Arabic
GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 May (MENA) — The Cairo papers today underline that what concerns Egypt regarding the Israeli elections is that the next Israeli Government should be prepared to continue the peace process and deal with the reality that stability in Israel and in the Middle East countries will be achieved only through a permanent, comprehensive, and fair peace.

In its editorial today under the headline "Arab Dealing With the Israeli Government," AL-AHRAM says that Egypt and the Arab countries concerned with peace are capable of dealing with any future government in Israel. If the Labor Party and Shim'on Peres win, the process will proceed normally in the next stage. If Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu wins, preparations for resuming

the peace process may take time. However, the peace process will certainly continue. We must not forget that the Likud Bloc started the peace process under Menachem Begin and later under Yitzhaq Shamir. The paper says, however, that this does not mean that the peace process will not face difficulties in the future, because the Likud's thinking differs from the Labor Party's, particularly regarding Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Concluding its editorial, AL-AHRAM says that the world is today focusing its attention on Israel to learn the results of the elections. The Arabs, the paper says, must be prepared to face the worst possibilities and hard stages of negotiations. The Arabs must employ all their political and economic resources to serve the Arab negotiators. The paper says that no Arab country should keep away from the arena of struggle, because a lack of cohesion and coordination will undermine the Arab position and rob the Arab negotiators of their cards before the other party.

AL-AKHBAR's editorial says that comparison between the two parties in Israel is senseless because there is no significant contradiction between the Israeli leaders and because there will be no real change in Israel's aggressive policy and in the situation in the Middle East without direct U.S. pressure. The biggest problem, however, is that under the Clinton administration, Washington has turned into an Israeli capital, and does everything that Tel Aviv dictates through the dominant Jewish lobby. The paper says this means that the important question is not who will win the elections in Israel but whether the United States will change its policy on the region and stop colluding with Israel and defending its crimes against the Palestinians and Arabs.

Under the headline "Peace Is the Impasse and Problem of the Government; The Two Rivals Are Two Sides of the Same Coin," AL-JUMHURIYAH chief editor Mahfuz al-Ansari, in his weekly article, writes: I wish the Likud and Netanyahu would win, even though the Arabs calculate, wager, and hope that Peres will win. Al-Ansari says the logic behind his desire has many reasons and motives. He says that perhaps Netanyahu's victory embodies a feeling of guilt by the Israeli society, which is punishing Peres, whose violence and terrorism have risen to unprecedented levels. Perhaps this is an attempt by the Israeli voters to cleanse their consciences of the outrageous crime of Qana in south Lebanon. He says that perhaps Netanyahu's success is a message to him from the Israeli voters, to stress that what is required is negotiations, that stubbornness and intransigence are rejected, and that Peres has been blamed for his violence and impetuosity.

Al-Ansari adds: My wish for Peres' defeat is prompted by the change in the behavior of Peres and Netanyahu.

The hot-headed Netanyahu wants to sit down, negotiate, and preach peace, whereas the peaceful Peres has become a warlord who is rattling his saber to kill defenseless people. He says that this in fact is the essence and secret of the Israeli structure. Wars, occupation, killing, and destruction were launched by the Labor Party, even if it was ruling under a national unity government, while peace was initiated by the Likud with Egypt, and the Likud stressed its desire for peace by attending the Madrid peace conference in the fall of 1991.

Egypt: Musa Denies 'Other Parties' To Attend Amman Summit

NC2905175796 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1745 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 29 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has denied that other parties will participate in the three-way summit that will be held in Amman in early June. Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, King Husayn of Jordan, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will attend this summit.

The summit will discuss developments in the Middle East peace process and ways of supporting the Palestinian side in the final-status talks, which will start after the Israeli elections.

Egypt: Ukrainian Deputy Premier Meets Mubarak, Comments on Ties

NC2905155796 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ukrainian vice prime minister said he and President Husni Mubarak discussed various aspects of cooperation between the two countries and ways to broaden them, including the economic, agricultural, industrial, and transportation fields.

Following a meeting with President Mubarak in al-Qubbah Palace today, he added that he conveyed a message from the Ukrainian president to President Mubarak containing an invitation for President Mubarak to visit Ukraine.

The Ukrainian vice prime minister described his audience with President Mubarak as good and useful. Praising Egyptian-Ukrainian ties, he voiced his hope that they will witness further progress in the future.

Egypt: Ukrainian Official Leaves After Visit

NC3005101896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0955 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 30 May (MENA)—Ukrainian Deputy Premier Viktor Pynzenyk left Cairo this morning after a few days' visit to Egypt, during

which he met with President Husni Mubarak and handed him a message from the Ukrainian president. The message included an invitation for Mubarak to visit Ukraine. The Ukrainian official held talks in Egypt to consolidate bilateral ties in various fields, particularly the economic domain.

Libya

Libya: 'Militant Islamic Group' Implicated in Benghazi Clashes

MM2905185696 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 28 May 96 pp 1,4

[Unattributed report: "Reports of Confrontations in Libya Following the Killing of a Security Officer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Libyan sources in Cairo have denied reports of armed clashes between Libyan security organs and armed groups in Benghazi during the last few days.

Libyan opposition sources announced that armed confrontations started less than two weeks ago in Benghazi then escalated over the past two days, following the killing of a lieutenant colonel of the internal security organs outside the al-Akhdar Mosque in the al-Majuri district after last Friday's [24 May] prayers.

The sources said that Lt. Col. Muftah Bu'ayu was watching the movements of some individuals who frequented the mosque, and it seems that there was also someone watching his moves.

The sources added that after the shooting of the police officer, clashes and chases erupted between the security organs, the revolutionary committees, and the armed groups, and continued throughout Saturday night in the al-Zaytun and al-Kish districts, two of the city's popular districts.

Meanwhile, the checkpoints, which number more than 20 between the al-Fuwayhat district on the city limits and the city center, and which are manned by the security organs, the army, and revolutionary committees, received some reinforcements. For the first time the "Municipal Guards" have started to carry weapons.

The sources said that the security organs' men conducted a chase in the city's main streets for the purpose of arresting someone called al-Hami whose picture was circulated throughout the city and to the checkpoints, as he is considered to be one of the most dangerous armed men, and as he managed to escape after being arrested.

The chase took place exactly at the junction between Shammatt street and Durnah street, near Benghazi's park. After al-Hami's escape, his father and brother

were arrested and taken to al-Abyar city near Benghazi. His brother, however, also managed to escape.

Fingers point accusingly to fundamentalist armed groups calling themselves the "Militant Islamic Group," which has claimed responsibility for the recent acts of violence in Libya in leaflets published in Denmark, including a bulletin called AL-FAJR which carries the group's address in Denmark.

Libya: Tripoli TV Shows Hangings of 4 People for Murder

LD2905212396 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] God says in his holy book: Ye who believe! The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder: The free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. After this, whoever exceeds the limits shall be in grave penalty. In the law of equality, therefore, is life to you, O ye men of understanding that ye may restrain yourselves. [passage omitted]

A number of those sentenced to death have been executed in implementation of judicial sentences that were endorsed by the Supreme Court and the Higher Council of Judicial Authorities. They committed murder for trivial and mean reasons in a barbaric way, which reveals an aggressive and criminal behavior. The execution of these sentences were shown in today's episode of the program "Security and the Society."

Morocco

Morocco: Spanish Prime Minister Aznar Departs

BR2905151896 Madrid ABC in Spanish 29 May 96 p 27

[Report by L. Ayllon and E. Serbeto: "Aznar Leaves Morocco, Convinced of Rabat's Willingness To Improve Relations"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar bade his Moroccan counterpart, Abdellatif Filali, farewell after a "short but intense" official visit. The prospect of favorable treatment for part of Morocco's debt with Spain is the most Morocco has obtained from Aznar, who was received with splendor. For the first time in months the thorny issue of Ceuta and Melilla was not even raised.

The wish to see Spanish-Moroccan relations enter a period of great intensity was repeatedly stressed by Aznar and Filali during the news conference which

marked the end of this short visit. Aznar described it as "very useful and productive," stating that "the privileged nature of relations will be reinforced in all areas."

Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed's official visit to Madrid next November and the promise to hold a new series of high-level bilateral talks in Spain in February are the next links in the chain with which the ties of friendship are to be secured. Public Works Minister Rafael Arias Salgado will be meeting his Moroccan counterpart to continue working on the project of a fixed transport link across the Gibraltar Strait, but no doubt Rabat's major concern is to find a formula to ease the burden of the debt with Spain. With regard to that issue Aznar has pledged himself to speed up the work of the group responsible for examining the details and means of transforming a proportion of the 240 billion-peseta debt in social development projects. A number of Spanish companies may benefit from that kind of project, now that the Spanish economic presence in Morocco is going through a particularly buoyant period. Aznar himself was able to ascertain this yesterday at a meeting with a delegation of Spanish and Moroccan businessmen, who are currently holding a conference in Casablanca.

Apart from purely economic issues Aznar also mentioned his intention to promote cultural exchanges, with special attention to the five Cervantes Institutes and the possibility that the often-postponed installation of a Spanish TV booster may finally happen, thus allowing Spanish broadcasts to be received on most of the Moroccan territory.

Anyone who has followed the development of Spanish-Moroccan relations closely will not be surprised by this very friendly climate following a year and a half of particularly serious tensions. The ups and downs caused by close neighborly relations are the reason for shifts from one extreme to the other practically without any transition. During [former Prime Minister] Gonzalez' latest visit in February the atmosphere began to be much warmer than in previous periods, in which fishing issues, the case of the Malaga consul, and the blockade of harbors had somewhat poisoned the atmosphere. Aznar was received by the press with a certain amount of wariness due to old fears about a more rigid position on Ceuta and Melilla on the part of a right-wing government. Nevertheless, the Moroccan authorities, beginning with King Hassan II himself, have been extremely attentive to the Spanish prime minister and, furthermore, have this time avoided any reference, even indirectly, to the two Spanish towns. When Moroccan journalists asked questions about the "reflection cell" (on Ceuta and Melilla's future) proposed by the Moroccan king, Aznar refused "politely to talk about something

which was not dealt with in the talks" and on which "you already know our position."

In contrast to Felipe Gonzalez' previous visits, during which the insistence with which certain questions were asked embarrassed the then prime minister, Aznar did not even utter the name of the two North African towns, and Filali did not make any comments that could give rise to ambiguous interpretations. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Sudan: 7-Point Plan for U.S.-Sudanese Relations Presented

MM3005085796 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI
in Arabic 28 May 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "American-Sudanese Dialogue Soon Following Bin-Ladin's Deportation to Kabul; France Notifies Khartoum of Its Implementation of Diplomatic Sanctions"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Khartoum: Major Joseph Lagu, former Sudanese vice president and now roving ambassador at the Sudanese Foreign Ministry, presented to the Sudanese leadership a new American plan aimed at promoting the improvement of Sudanese-U.S. relations during ideological and political meetings held throughout the past week. The Sudanese decisionmakers are now busy preparing Sudan's reply to the proposed plan, which was sponsored by Joseph Lagu with the encouragement of influential American elements in the U.S. Congress and some decisionmakers at the U.S. State Department.

Following the dinner banquet held by Sudanese Minister Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah in honor of Ambassador Lagu last Saturday [25 May], AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI was able to obtain details of the new plan for the expected Sudanese-U.S. rapprochement following the departure of more than 10 of the so-called "Arab Afghan Mujahidin" who were living in the Sudanese capital, headed by Saudi opposition leader Usamah Bin-Ladin, who has now arrived in Kabul, where he was welcomed by Golboddin Hekmatyar, who is propped by Bin-Ladin. Bin-Ladin's departure to Afghanistan was much welcomed by Saudi circles which welcomed, for the first time, the internal plan of General al-Bashir's government, which the Saudi foreign minister called a draft peace charter.

According to information received by AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI, Joseph Lagu handed Sudanese parliament speaker Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, President Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir, and Foreign Minister 'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha a seven-point plan which he proposed as being essential for paving the way for an active Sudanese-U.S. dialogue.

The proposed points were as follows: First, that the Sudanese Government would make arrangements to conclude a final cease-fire in southern Sudan with the South Sudan Liberation Movement [as published] led by Colonel John Garang and to halt all Sudanese Government military activity there within six months.

Second: That the Sudanese Government would adopt a foreign policy under which it would refrain from its vociferous opposition to the Middle East peace plan and would confine itself to mere popular stances of rejection of normalization with Israel.

Third: That the Sudanese Government would deport all elements operating under the command of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and other Islamic groups now present in Sudanese territory.

Fourth: That the Sudanese Government would continue the policy of internal openness and the opening up of freedoms such as freedom of the press and freedom of exchange of information.

Fifth: That it would rescind the emergency law.

Sixth: That it would abandon its policy of calling for escalation of the political situation with the United States.

Seventh: That it would keep away from the Iran-Iraq axis.

Ambassador Joseph Lagu said during the reception held in his honor on his visit to Sudan that political concessions will have to be made so as to make things compatible with the tendency toward normalization of Sudanese-U.S. relations on a new basis.

In this context, well-informed political sources yesterday told AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that the speech which President Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir will be delivering to members of the parliament will define precisely the trend toward a Sudanese-U.S. dialogue on the one hand and a Sudanese-Egyptian dialogue on the other, including the practical steps that would be taken to improve relations. In his speech, Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir will also touch on internal issues, headed by the economic crisis.

AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI has learned that the plan brought by Joseph Lagu, the prominent Southern leader, met with encouragement from the U.S. Administration because it contains the points proposed by Timothy Carney, U.S. ambassador to Khartoum, currently resident in Nairobi, and because of the rivalry between Moscow and Washington following the visit by the deputy Russian foreign minister, who rejected, during his talks in Khartoum, any automatic extension by the UN Security Council of Resolution 1054.

It seems the United States has become wary of a Sudanese-Russian rapprochement which would undermine the U.S. plan for bringing pressure to bear on Khartoum, following Moscow's growing interest in the Sudanese economy and its acquisition of important economic contracts pertaining to such projects as that of the electrification of the Hamadab dam and gold prospecting in eastern Sudan.

Elsewhere, the Sudanese Government yesterday received notice from the French Foreign Ministry of France's start of its implementation of the plan to reduce diplomatic representation abroad. Paris has already deported Miss Ahlam 'Umar, third secretary at the Sudanese Embassy in Paris. Likewise, the German Government has informed Khartoum of its decision to deport the Sudanese commercial attache, who resides in Holland from where he carries out his duties as attache in Germany. Germany thus became the fourth country to comply with the resolution to reduce the size of Sudanese diplomatic missions abroad, after the United States, which deported Sudanese diplomat al-Sadiq Bakhit, and Austria, which deported one Sudanese diplomat. Britain has decided to ask three Sudanese diplomats to leave British territory, but London has not yet named the diplomats to be asked to leave. [passage omitted]

Sudan: Al-Bashir on Sanctions, Regional Relations

MM3005101396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 29 May 96 p 16

[Interview with Sudanese President Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir by Sa'id Muhammad al-Hasan in Khartoum; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Hasan] The government has emphasized its eagerness to improve and strengthen Sudan's foreign relations but it seems that Security Council Resolutions 1044 and 1054 will prevent that. How can openness to the outside world be achieved?

[Al-Bashir] There are numerous circles of foreign relations — African, Arab, and Asian. We have plans for movement in all these directions. Foreign relations are certainly wider and more comprehensive than all that because they cover all the diplomatic, political, economic, commercial, cultural, and technical aspects. Despite the Security Council's resolution imposing some measures, we feel that many states have not implemented it because they are not convinced of its causes. Some Security Council members even believe that Sudan was punished without evidence.

We can say that the recent Security Council resolution showed the extent of the injustice to Sudan and led to sympathy with it making it possible to exploit that

sympathy in expressing its own view regarding these measures. So far, the Arab and African states are maintaining the same level of relations with us. We have received nothing to indicate that they are implementing these measures. Furthermore, the resolution does not prevent improvement of relations. There are signs pointing in that direction. On our visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia we managed to achieve positive results removing all the blemishes in Sudanese-Saudi relations. We hope they will flourish in the interest and for the good of both peoples and countries.

[Al-Hasan] Have there been contacts with Kuwait?

[Al-Bashir] Our endeavors continued with Kuwait for the normalization of relations following the setback in these relations as a result of the Gulf war and other factors. Our efforts to improve relations with other states are continuing.

[Al-Hasan] When Salim Ahmad Salim, secretary general of the OAU, came over he warned the Sudanese Government of the consequences of falling into the web of the international sanctions scenario because of the difficulty of coming out of it. Do you expect more sanctions?

[Al-Bashir] Sudan has been punished without evidence. We do not rule out the possibility that the same forces which were behind that measure would impose punishment but we will continue to move to expose the plotting against Sudan and to convince others of the injustice done to Sudan, which should be lifted. Our aim will be to explain the situation on the basis of facts.

[Al-Hasan] The U.S. Administration has its own agenda and its own charges against Sudan, pertaining to terrorism, human rights, pluralism, and democracy. How do you deal with it?

[Al-Bashir] The Americans have talked about terrorism without evidence. We have held several dialogues with them and asked them about their evidence. You cannot make accusations without evidence. When the incident of the assassination attempt on President Husni Mubarak occurred in the summer of 1995 they found the pretext they were looking for and stuck to it.

It is clear that the matter of that attempt was geared to be exploited against Sudan. And so came the escalation by Ethiopia and Egypt who hoped that Africa, through the OAU, would play that role. The mechanism for the settlement of disputes was activated so that Sudan would be charged and condemned. The case was submitted to it without the approval of the second party, namely Sudan, and without its presence, invitation, or notification even though it was the accused party. The indictment was made by the mechanism committee in our absence.

When we acted and exposed the erroneous measures and an OAU delegation came to Khartoum and made inquiries and held meetings, and when we attended the second meeting of the mechanism committee, the result was positive and the mechanism committee was convinced that there was no case to answer, but it asked Sudan to search for the suspects and hand them over to Ethiopia if found.

The forces behind Resolution 1054, however, felt that that mechanism did not achieve what they wanted and were hoping for, and took the file to the Security Council. The United States was behind that issue and it pushed Ethiopia and Egypt into it, but in the end the Egyptian position on the sanctions changed. They were the ones who had sponsored the sanctions issue. When the nonaligned states refused, the United States intervened and imposed the recent resolution. The Americans are not happy about Sudan's position of independence dating back to the Gulf war when it opposed the interference of U.S. forces in the region.

[Al-Hasan] Does Sudan's position on the Middle East peace process have anything to do with it?

[Al-Bashir] There is a Sudanese position on the Middle East. On the Palestinian question, we believe that some Arab territories are still occupied. We have no reason to work for the normalization of relations with Israel. The claims that have been made are unfounded. I sent envoys, delegations, and messages to a number of capitals in the course of the campaign and moves against Security Council Resolution 1044.

[Al-Hasan] What is the latest regarding your invitation to fraternal Egypt to enter into a dialogue to resolve the differences?

[Al-Bashir] We have demonstrated clear intentions for the improvement of relations with Egypt and we have shown sufficient goodwill. Now it can be said that the ball or the matter is in the Egyptian court.

[Al-Hasan] You have also called for the improvement of relations with the neighboring states but, according to some reports, the borders with Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda are on fire and there are military concentrations. What are your plans?

[Al-Bashir] We are convinced that the states hostile to Sudan are the states which have links with the United States. We have nine neighboring states. Excluding those three states, we have excellent relations with Kenya, Zaire, Chad, Central Africa, and Libya. It is clear from the provocations of the three states that they are under U.S. influence, but our efforts to improve relations with the neighboring countries will continue because the security of the region is an integral process and, despite

the instability or the attempt to destabilize Sudan, that process is important for the region. The fact is that we are neighbors and our fate is to cooperate in the region and to use the resources and capabilities to serve the interests of the peoples of the region. We should realize that going along with foreign designs serves neither national nor regional interests.

[Al-Hasan] How do you view the killing of the French monks?

[Al-Bashir] We are against violence, assassination, hostage-taking, and indiscriminate killing. That is against Islamic principles. Islam has clear principles. The killing of hostages, ambassadors, or envoys is against and runs contrary to Islam, its values, and its teachings. Such actions are alien to Islam and its good values. We see such actions as a distortion of Islam and they are harmful to Islam, giving others who are opposed to Islam an excuse to attack Islam and link it to terrorism. Islam is a religion of tolerance and humanity. Even in the days of the old Islamic conquests, and with the admission of their enemies, Muslims were more tolerant with them. Islam does not condone or accept what has happened.

[Al-Hasan] After the presidential elections and the meetings with the political and ideological forces, observers expected broad participation in the government to tackle current problems. What prevented that?

[Al-Bashir] After the elections and the announcement of the results, which proved categorically that the people are behind the Salvation, we promised to open the way for consultation, which is a basic principle and feature of the Islamic nation — "and they should consult among themselves on their affairs" [Koranic verse] — we heard the views of various people and their assessment of the past and visions of the future. The views were sometimes identical and sometimes opposite or different. Meetings have been held in the context of the possible start of a dialogue. We were in disagreement on some basics in these talks but we do not say that this is the end of the road, for we and those we met with were in agreement on the importance of that approach and the need to continue with it on all these issues. I believe that consultation and listening to various views is important, especially in the case of those with some experience. The dialogue will, therefore, continue and we have no barriers. Just as we say that our views are correct, but they are liable to error, and the same applies to others. The channels of contact will remain open.

[Al-Hasan] Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, former prime minister and leader of the Ummah Party, has stated that his meeting with you was the summit of the will for

understanding but did not provide any opportunity for achieving a political solution for the time being. What is your comment?

[Al-Bashir] There was a dialogue and views were expressed. The dialogue will remain open. We agreed not to give details of what went on between us because we wanted to avoid exaggeration. We also agreed that our points of disagreement would remain open to discussion and what we agree upon would be announced openly.

[Al-Hasan] The peace charter the government signed with the faction of Machar and Carabino covered points addressed in previous conferences and agreements, such as the referendum. Why was it not proposed to all the forces concerned?

[Al-Bashir] From the beginning, we made efforts to establish peace, and we persevered but the attempts showed that collective agreement was difficult. At the second Abuja meeting no agreement was reached but the process for the establishment of peace continues and contacts are also continuing, and that includes the John Garang faction. There has been no rejection of the peace charter except out of stubbornness. There will be peace, God willing.

[Al-Hasan] What are your plans for ending or easing economic pressure on the public who have suffered much from that?

[Al-Bashir] On the question of the economic pressures, it is a question of inflation and the causes are clear and are to be found in the balance of payments deficit. We are trying to increase revenues and reduce demand for foreign currencies, and we are also endeavoring to activate exports and find new markets with new exports. We are also encouraging Sudanese expatriates to transfer some of their income to the country, that is Sudan is offering them favorable rates. Hence the creation of the foreign currency exchange centers. These were criticized but the aim is clear. They now have clear hard currency income and have stabilized exchange rates. We will continue to assess development plans and to have special priorities to lessen the demand for dollars and reduce import of luxury goods. We are also trying to remedy the question of the oil bill. The policy on provision of oil has achieved tangible success over the past seven years and the waiting lines and congestion have disappeared. As far as the general budget is concerned, we are trying to cut government expenditure and program the necessities, and we are also trying to increase revenues by expanding the tax umbrella to include sectors that were not covered before, in order to bridge the gap. The electricity subsidy is a very great concern because it reaches 95 billion

Sudanese pounds [as published], which is a massive bill necessitating less electricity subsidy and rationalization of electricity consumption, which is expensive.

[Al-Hasan] There have been many reports about Sudanese oil. When will it reach the filling stations?

[Al-Bashir] There have been reports about oil indeed. Refining will begin end of June 1996 at al-Abyad refinery with production of 10,000 barrels and at Khartoum refinery with production of 5,000 barrels. Massive efforts are being made in developing fields and building roads in muddy areas which have high technical and financial requirements, and in the maintenance of railroads in al-Muglad and al-Abyad, and the same goes for river transport. Certainly, the start of production will cut the oil imports bill and the electricity bill. We hope that production will increase to 70,000 barrels within two years once the al-Abyad pipeline is completed. After achieving self-sufficiency we will move to the stage of export, God willing.

[Al-Hasan] The recent cases of deaths in the operations room of the Khartoum Hospital reflected a deterioration in medical services as well as an increase in the cost of treatment. What measures have you taken to tackle that problem?

[Al-Bashir] Indeed, the cost of treatment has become very high and the state is trying to cover a part of the cost. We may perhaps recall that when the Salvation Front took over it found the capital's main hospitals in semi-collapse. It made great efforts and made major financial allocations for the maintenance of these hospitals but, most regrettably, after billions were spent it was clear that the failure was administrative.

We will remedy that, especially in the major hospitals. A health security plan is being envisaged to provide free treatment, and a special body has been formed for all participants.

[Al-Hasan] After years of National Salvation rule, how do you assess the Front's performance?

[Al-Bashir] If we are to speak very briefly we would speak about the basics and about the important matter of security. What is a human being's life without security? That is what the Salvation Front provided, security, and it broke the back of the mutiny and liberated very vast areas in the south, and even in the north in Darfur. That is a clear achievement.

We must remember that when the Salvation Front came in June 1989 Sudan was a "famine state" suffering difficulties and a high cost of living.

Now Sudan is different from that famine state, and the deterioration has been stopped. The state has urged

farmers to expand and increase production, and it has supported producers. The countryside is now different from what it used to be. It now has wealth and we have followed a special policy to protect the consumers in the cities.

Now expansion is under way in medical services, and whatever is said about bad conditions, a comparison of the number of beds in the hospitals with the number before the Salvation rule would show the extent of the expansion that has occurred in that field where new hospitals, complexes, and treatment centers have emerged. There has also been expansion in the field of general education and secondary and higher education as well as university education.

As far as the infrastructures are concerned, numerous roads have been built in many areas of Sudan.

More roads are under construction in northern and western areas, and there have been repairs on the Khartoum-Madani road and the Khartoum-Port Sudan road. A number of airports have also been built at Port Sudan, Danaqilah, al-Fashir, and Nyala. We have also expanded sea ports and equipped Sawakin port which now receives ships.

Work is now in progress on raising the level of al-Rusayris dam, maintaining the Sanar dam, and deepening the al-Hamdab and al-Jabbar dams. Shipping move-

ment has been secured. Tractors now reach areas in the south. Trains now reach Waw. They were all at a standstill before 30 June 1989.

Western Sahara

Western Sahara: UN Suspends Referendum Operation, Reduces Troop Numbers

LD2905215596 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Nations Security Council [UNSC] has decided today to reduce the number of international troops present in Western Sahara because of the obstacles hindering the organization of a referendum for self-determination.

The UNSC adopted unanimously a resolution tabled by UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali. The resolution suggested the suspending of the operation of the identification of voters until the two parties, Morocco and the Saharans, provide tangible and convincing evidence of their willingness to cooperate.

The resolution also reduced the number of the UN troops by 20 percent, on the basis that this would not affect the capability of these troops to monitor the ceasefire.

--Bahrain

Bahrain: Explosion Reportedly Injures Wife of Arrested Protester

NC2905175896 Paris AFP in English
1717 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Manama, May 29 (AFP) - A young Bahraini woman was seriously injured in an explosion in a Shiite Moslem village west of Manama on Wednesday [29 May], a government spokesman told AFP.

He said the 20-year-old victim was the wife of a man arrested by the Bahraini authorities during the anti-government protests that have rocked the Gulf archipelago for the past 18 months.

The cause of the blast in the village of Jidd Hafs was not clear and investigations were under way to find out how it happened, he said.

The official added that the woman was on the roof of her house when the explosion struck, and that she was in hospital in a serious condition.

At least 22 people have been killed in Bahrain since the start of anti-government protests in December 1994 led mainly by Shiite Moslems calling for the restoration of parliament which was dissolved by the Sunni-led authorities in 1975. [passage omitted]

Bahrain: U.S. General Holds News Conference on Regional Security

JN2905163296 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1400 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 29 May (WAKH)—General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, expressed the United States' support for all the measures taken by the Bahraini Government to confront acts of violence and sabotage and to safeguard the country's security and stability.

At a news conference held here today, in the presence of His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, the U.S. military official stressed that relations between his country and Bahrain are deep-rooted, noting that his talks with Bahraini Amir His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah dealt with the means of promoting these relations. Shalikashvili said: I take this opportunity to thank the amir for all the facilities extended by Bahrain.

He said that he will do all he can to further promote the deep-rooted and good relations between the two countries.

The U.S. military official pointed out that his country follows with concern all the developments in the Gulf region, noting that Iran poses a threat to the region's security. However, he stressed that the United States does not seek a confrontation with Iran, but wants to reiterate its commitment to maintaining the region's security and stability.

He added that his country will ensure the Iraqi leadership does not use the money it will obtain from selling oil to acquire arms or threaten the security of the region.

Asked if there is a plan to commit more U.S. troops to the region, Shalikashvili said: "I don't see a need for that at present." He asserted, however, that the United States will continue to observe the situation in the region.

Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, welcomed the U.S. military official, noting that his talks with him focused on military consultations and developments in the Gulf region, which his highness characterized as extremely important for the world.

The heir apparent stressed that the visit of the U.S. chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs to Bahrain is good evidence of the strong ties between the two countries and a good opportunity to exchange views on strategic regional issues.

The U.S. official's visit to the State of Bahrain is part of his current tour of the region.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Speaker Calls For Severing of Relations With Libya

LD2905151396 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
1348 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 29 May (KUNA) — Ahmad 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Sa'dun, speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, today called for relations with Libya to be suspended or severed, following President [as received] Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi's attack on Kuwait.

Sa'dun was commenting on the Libyan president's statement to a gathering of students and lecturers at Cairo University on 27 May, which contained remarks that constituted an infringement of Kuwait's independence and sovereignty.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti News Agency, the speaker of the National Assembly said: "Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi's statement must not be dealt with in the normal diplomatic way, but by taking a swift and decisive measure up to suspending or even severing relations with the Libyan regime."

Sa'dun added: "What was said by al-Qadhdhafi did not reach us via news agencies and so does not require a confirmation of the accuracy of what was reported. We saw him and heard him directly. The least that could be said about the man is that he is not normal."

Sa'dun ended his statement by saying: "I suggest that al-Qadhdhafi should send his charge d'affaires in Kuwait to represent him [in the country of] the man whom he has previously described as the leader of a gang rather than a head of state." He was referring to a remark by the Libyan president about the head of the Iraqi regime when he received a Kuwaiti popular delegation led by Sa'dun in December 1990 during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: U.S. Line on Iraqi Oil Linked to Pro-Saudi Regime Line

*MM3005101996 London AL-ISLAH in Arabic
27 May 96 p 2*

[Unattributed article: "Who Allowed Iraq To Export Oil"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The UN resolution allowing Iraq to export oil for food and medicine was last week's most important news item in the media covering the Middle East and the Gulf. It is not true that the reason for overcoming the hurdle is Iraq's compliance with the UN resolution. Months ago, Iraq had agreed on the resolution, without reservations. What is new in this issue is that gasoline prices in the United States rose slightly, causing alarm among the American people. The U.S. Administration did not want to allow Iraqi

oil exports for fear that oil prices would collapse, leading to the collapse of the fragile Saudi economy which is totally oil-reliant and largely dependent on oil prices. The Americans were so opposed to allowing Iraq to export oil that they allowed the United States' strategic oil stockpiles to be used in order to reduce gas prices, but this measure failed. In view of the fact that the U.S. elections are approaching, and because Clinton is worried that his policy might be linked to the rise in gasoline prices, he gave instructions to allow Iraq to export its oil and thus get rid of the crisis in the United States. The Americans tried to slow down the resolution's implementation, so that its impact on oil prices would be limited and so that, on one hand, they would make their people happy, and on the other, they would minimize the possibility of the Saudi regime's economic collapse. Thus a few cents' increase in the price of a liter of gas in the United States is more important to the "international community" than the starvation and ruin of a whole people under the blockade.

Saudi Arabia: PRC Defense Minister Arrives on Visit

*LD2905232896 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio
Network in Arabic 2230 GMT 29 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His excellency General Chi Haotian, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, member of the State Council, and national defense minister of the People's Republic of China, and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Jeddah last night on a visit to the kingdom lasting a few days. [passage omitted]

Iraq: National Assembly Session Postponed 'Until Further Notice'

JN2905163596 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in English 1600 GMT 29 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The National Assembly decided to postpone a spring session set to begin on the first of June till further notice.

Iraq: Al-Anbari Explains Oil Deal Procedures

JN3005101896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0725 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 30 May (INA)—Ambassador Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi negotiating team [to the oil talks with the United Nations], stressed that the memorandum of understanding which Iraq and the United Nations signed on 20 May marks the start of a process to achieve cooperation and credibility.

In an interview with AL-THAWRAH published here today, al-Anbari said the memorandum of understanding allows Iraq to export about \$2 billion of oil and oil byproducts and to spend the greater part [of the revenues] to import food and other civilian supplies in accordance with the guidelines set by the memorandum.

Al-Anbari said: The said amount may be increased 90 days after starting the implementation of the memorandum by filing a petition with the UN secretary general. Iraq hopes this can be done.

Al-Anbari said: The UN security Council member states, with the exception of the United States and Britain, wanted to conclude an agreement quickly to ease the Iraqi people's suffering because they understand that the embargo has lost its international legitimacy.

He added that these countries saw in the memorandum of understanding the means to ease the damage caused by the embargo. These states, chief among which are France, Russia, China, Indonesia, Egypt, and Chile, represent the overwhelming majority in the UN Security Council.

Ambassador al-Anbari stressed that Iraq wants to develop its ties with all countries in the world to serve legitimate interests and help achieve stability, security, and development in the region. He said he hopes the United States and Britain will reconsider their position toward Iraq.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari said there are three basic steps which must be carried out simultaneously to implement the memorandum of understanding. The first

is the signing of the memorandum. The second stipulates that Iraq should draft a plan for the entire country which includes the food, medicine, and other civilian supplies Iraq wishes to import within a period of six months and present it to the UN secretary general for approval. Concerned Iraqi authorities are working on completing this step very quickly. Al-Anbari said he expects the plan to be completed, drafted, and discussed with the UN secretary general's representative within a period of 10 days or two weeks of the date of signing the memorandum of understanding. Al-Anbari concluded by saying: The third step stipulates that the committee established in accordance with Resolution 661 should set simple procedures to implement what was expressed in the memorandum of understanding. The committee is doing this now.

Iraq: Al-Anbari on Oil-for-Food Implementation

MM2905145496 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 May 96 p 2

[Report on interview with Iraqi negotiator 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari by 'Ukbah 'Ali al-Salih in Paris; date not given: "The 'Oil-for-Food' Agreement Contains Inconsistencies; Iraq Views It as a Step Toward Total Lifting of the Embargo"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris — 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, the Iraqi ambassador to UNESCO and negotiator with the United Nations for the "oil-for-food" agreement, said that the most important part of the agreement which Iraq signed with the United Nations is the fact that the agreement "opens the door to other intangible and indirect steps."

He said that "Iraq will be able to negotiate with foreign companies without any fears, the world now knows that the blockade is an exceptional and temporary state of affairs, and this is the start of a new page in Iraq's relations with the United Nations."

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, al-Anbari added that the agreement with the Security Council contains some technical inconsistencies which need to be resolved by the "monitoring committee." As an example of these inconsistencies he mentioned the fact that the agreement allows Iraq to export other petroleum products apart from crude oil, while its clauses state that they have to be exported via the oil pipeline network and through the Turkish Ceyhan or the Iraqi al-Bakr port.

He said that all experts know that it is impossible to transport Iraqi petroleum derivatives, mostly fuels, through pipelines which [normally] carry crude oil. Al-Anbari said that some 40 percent of Iraqi oil revenues

will go toward paying compensation and the monitoring committee's expenses and making the oil deals. He added that some 750,000 barrels of oil per day will be offered on the markets, and that this is not a fixed quantity as it depends on market prices.

On guaranteeing the protection of Iraqi oil pipelines in the northern areas controlled by the Kurds, al-Anbari said: "Logically, the Kurds should be very pleased with this agreement. They are part of Iraq and the Iraqi people, and because some \$130-150 million will be allocated for satisfying the needs of the Kurds, who are part of the Iraqi people."

Al-Anbari added: "The Kurdish forces must refrain from any hostile action against the pipelines, especially since the Security Council has imposed protection on the oil."

He added: "The pipelines pass through areas controlled by Kurdistan Democratic Party leader Mas'ud Barzani, and my impression is that he welcomes this agreement. The United Nations informed us of their [the Kurds'] happiness with the resolution. This is logical and reasonable."

On Iraq's need for technical assistance to produce, transport, and market the quantities of oil that it is allowed to export, al-Anbari said that "Iraqi engineers have enough experience in this field, and have repaired all the Iraqi installations. However, if there is any need for technical assistance, it will be obtained with the agreement of the boycott committee."

On which quarters the oil will be sold to, al-Anbari said that "the sales contracts require the boycott committee's agreement, and we must comply with the conditions prevailing in the oil market with regard to prices, delivery, and so on."

Al-Anbari said that the agreement with the United Nations is "temporary, and states that it is not an alternative to Article 22 of Security Council Resolution 986" which deals with the lifting of the total embargo on Iraqi oil.

'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari also told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "I believe that Article 22 should have been implemented a long time ago. In my view, the fact that it has not been implemented is a political rather than a technical decision, since all the conditions for removing the weapons of mass destruction have been met, with constant monitoring systems in place. Iraq can no longer violate any of the Security Council resolutions. We were expecting Ambassador Ekeus to present a report in this context. Talking about 'documents' is a different matter. Resolution 986 talks about weapons and equipment rather than documents and papers."

On Iraq's reasons for accepting the "oil-for-food" agreement after rejecting it for a long time, al-Anbari said: "We were waiting for the implementation of Article 22 and Ekeus' report in this context. Why should we accept a temporary, partial, and complicated solution? However, other factors have made it impossible to implement Article 22, and consequently, we decided to amend the oil-for-food agreement so that it ensures Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and ease the procedures for its implementation without it being an alternative to Article 22."

On rumors that there is a connection between the partial lifting of the embargo and the progress of peace in the Middle East, al-Anbari said: "The two issues are unrelated. The Iraqi issue is within the UN framework, while peace in the Middle East is outside it." Al-Anbari went on to say that "perhaps we exaggerate U.S. might and influence. The United States found itself in a position of self-defense in the Security Council, where all the member states criticized it." On rumors of a rapprochement with Syria, al-Anbari said: "We are interested in removing all obstacles that hinder relations with Syria, as it is the Arab country that is closest to Iraq."

On reports of improvement in Iraqi-Jordanian relations, the Iraqi ambassador said: "We hope that the cloud in relations with Jordan has passed."

On relations with Turkey, al-Anbari said: "The political situation in Turkey is unstable, and hence Turkey should realize that its interests lie in Iraq's stability and the safeguarding of its territorial integrity."

Iraq: Oil Pumped Into Turkish Pipeline

JN3005084296 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0825 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 30 May (INA)—Iraq today started loading the Turkish section of the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline in preparation for resuming Iraqi oil exports to world markets in mid-June.

This was announced by Lieutenant General Engineer 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, the oil minister, during a news conference he held this morning at the Oil Ministry.

He said: The loading of the Turkish section requires three to five days. The process aims to test the pipeline and to restore pressure inside it. Iraq already finished loading the Iraqi section of the pipeline and raised pressure inside it to high degrees.

He added: Iraq will resume oil exports via al-Bakr Port on the Arabian Gulf and the Turkish port of Ceyhan on

the Mediterranean at a rate of 800,000 barrels a day. Between 440,000 and 450,000 barrels a day will be exported via Ceyhan Port and 330,000 barrels a day will be exported via al-Bakr Port.

The oil minister said the inspectors, appointed by the UN secretary general, are expected to arrive in al-Bakr Port within a week to supervise the practical implementation of contracts Iraq will sign with foreign companies, especially in terms of the supplied quantity and quality.

Oil Minister Lt. Gen. 'Amir Muhammad Rashid said Iraq contacted 56 international firms to inquire about their needs for Iraqi oil and so far received replies from 20 to 30 international companies. He said Iraq is currently studying the requests of these companies in accordance with its priorities. These priorities include dealing with international companies that have a sound financial base and those from friendly states which had positive stands regarding the Iraqi people's suffering from the unfair embargo.

Iraq: 2 Senior Army Officers Reportedly 'Defect' to Opposition

NC2905153796 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1440 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources of the Iraqi opposition say a high-ranking officer defected to the liberated areas in north Iraq a few days ago. Colonel 'Abd-al-Basit al-Samarra'i joined the opposition ranks after reaching the liberated areas. The same sources last week reported that Brigadier General Najib al-'Usaymi also joined the opposition ranks in north Iraq.

Iraq: Spokesman Refutes Iranian Statements on POW's

JN2905081496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1840 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 May (INA)—Iraq categorically denied the untrue statements made by General 'Abdallah Najafi, official in charge of the Iranian POW's committee, and his allegations that there are no Iraqi POW's in Iran, as well as his accusation that Iraq does not cooperate on ending the POW's issue.

Commenting to INA on the Iranian official's statements, a spokesman for the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said that General Najafi's statements, made to the IRANIAN NEWS AGENCY on 26 May, were no more than a repetition of the allegations made by other Iranian officials. These statements included falsehoods and contradictions, which require a response.

The spokesman added: It is strange for this Iranian official to say that Iraq does not show cooperation on ending the POW's issue at a time when the whole international community, particularly the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], are fully aware of the illegal and inhumane position Iran has taken in addressing the POW's issue and in using this issue for political purposes, which is now known by everyone.

The spokesman asserted that the Iranian side refused to deal with Paragraph 3 of Security Council Resolution 598 and with Article 118 of the Third Geneva Agreement for 1949 which provides for releasing all POW's and returning them home once the actual military operations stop.

He added: The Iranian side did not adhere to the plan signed on 14 February 1992 after the joint technical committee met in Geneva from 12 to 14 February 1992 at the invitation of the ICRC. He said that Iran stopped the ICRC activities' again, closed its offices on 26 March 1992, and accused it of carrying out acts of espionage in Iran. Our POW's, therefore have been lacking international protection.

The spokesman pointed out that on 15 April 1992, the ICRC called on the joint technical committee to hold another meeting in Geneva. On 16 April 1992, the attendees reached an agreement with four appendixes stressing the implementation of the plan of action signed on 14 February 1992 as well as resuming the repatriation of the POW's no later than 1 May 1992. The Iranian regime, however, once again evaded what was agreed upon and notified the ICRC that they would postpone this operation. They did not set another date to resume the operation.

The spokesman said that the ICRC signed an informal agreement with Iran in Bern, Switzerland, on 7 September 1993 to reactivate the ICRC's efforts in Iran to release the Iraqi POW's held in Iran.

He added: In implementation of this agreement, the ICRC began to interview our prisoners in Iran, who voiced their wish to return to Iraq. However, the Iranian authorities did not fulfill their commitments under the Bern agreement and froze the activities of the ICRC. This was revealed by the ICRC memorandum of 19 September 1994 to Iraq and Iran.

He added that Iraq and Iran signed an agreement in Tehran on 14 September 1995 on settling the prisoners issue. Two meetings were held for that purpose on the Iraqi-Iranian border. However, as usual, Iran tried to circumvent that agreement to cover up its serious violations of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949.

The spokesman stressed that the Iranian allegation that there are no Iraqi POW's in Iran is a serious allegation that exposes the reality of the Iranian stand and totally contradicts the unequivocal evidence that the ICRC has, including the lists of POW's officially registered by it. The lists confirm that there are over 20,000 Iraqi POW's still held in Iran. This is in addition to over 60,000 MIA's. Such a false allegation basically undermines the Tehran agreement mentioned above. It is a serious violation of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 on POW's treatment and contradicts General Najafi's allegation that Iran is interested in continuing negotiations with Iraq.

He said that General Najafi's allegation that ICRC representatives met with 10,000 Iraqi POW's who voiced their wish to seek refuge in Iran is a lie, because facts reveal that the ICRC does not have any activity in Iran. In addition, the ICRC has not issued any statement to this effect, as it usually does in such cases.

The spokesman added that Iraq reiterates that it released all Iranian POW's and returned them to their country under ICRC supervision. No Iranian POW's remained

in Iraq except for those who refuse to return and who informed the ICRC that they do not wish to return. They confirmed their desire before the official Iranian delegation which visited Iraq and met them.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed that General Najafi has turned the facts about the POW's file upside down. He is launching statements and lies that can only be interpreted as reflecting the fears he and his associates are experiencing about revelations of the heavy human losses suffered by Iran during its aggression against Iraq.

Concluding his statement, the spokesman said that the Iraqi Foreign Ministry calls on Iranian officials to stop making such false allegations and to abide by the provisions of Article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 and the rules of tolerant Islam which condemn Iran's continued holding of our prisoners. The Iraqi Government holds the Iranian Government responsible for the safety of our prisoners and for their continued detention without any legal justification, the spokesman said.

Israel: Netanyahu Expected To Win by 1-1.5 Percent Edge

TA3005091296 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0715 GMT 30 May 96

[Studio talk between anchors Razi Barqay, Avri Gil'ad, and Qobi Meydan — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Meydan] Can we now say with certainty that Binyamin Netanyahu is the next prime minister?

[Barqay] We can say it with almost total certainty, because all the ordinary ballot boxes have been counted. Binyamin Netanyahu leads by 0.7 percent, which represent approximately 20,000 votes. All that remains to be done is to open the double envelopes.

[Gil'ad] Why do we hear that soldiers' votes are almost automatically given to the Likud?

[Barqay] First of all, soldiers' votes have been traditionally given to the right. It happened in 1992, and it also happened in the 1980's. Yet what is even more significant is the computer breakdown of the civilian Jewish vote we received 30 minutes ago, according to which Binyamin Netanyahu received 55 and Peres 45 percent. Assuming the army ballots followed the same trend, the gap between the two candidates will remain unchanged. Even supposing the postassassination generation will give Shim'on Peres slightly more votes, Binyamin Netanyahu will still win by an edge of 1 to 1.5 percent.

[Meydan] When can we expect to receive the final results?

[Barqay] Not before Saturday [1 June] night, because there are still disqualified ballot boxes which have to be recounted, and since the race is so close, the Central Election Committee will want to count them thoroughly. I do not think we can expect an official Central Election Committee announcement before the Sabbath is out. [passage omitted]

Israel: Final Election Results Expected on 31 May

TA3005060096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0500 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the most recent vote count Binyamin Netanyahu is leading by 0.7 percent. Close to 99 percent of the standard civilian balloting precinct votes have been counted so far, but the exact results will be announced only after the double envelopes are counted on 31 May.

The official in charge of the double-envelopes vote count, Yosef Tzitzovich, says the Central Election Committee believes that the counting of the double

envelopes will be completed two hours before the Sabbath [which starts around 1500 GMT] on 31 May. Our correspondent Gil Litman notes that the double envelopes contain the votes of soldiers, hospitalized civilians, envoys and diplomats, seamen, and prison inmates. Officials are inspecting the lists of these voters at this time, and they will start counting the double-envelope votes on the morning of 31 May. As said, the results are expected to be published before the Sabbath.

Israel: Party Leaders React to Exit Polls; Turnout Data Given

TA2905214496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
2100 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following are some reactions to the exit polls voiced by leading members of the various parties:

Minister Yosi Beilin said that Labor will set up the broadest coalition possible but will not accept the Likud, Moledet, or anyone else who tries to dictate a sterilization of or halt to the peace process.

Likud Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Begin said that the Oslo accord coalition — Meretz, HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] and the ADP [Arab Democratic Party] — has lost its majority in the Knesset.

MK Refa'el Eytan said that, as a matter of principle, he will reject an offer to join a coalition headed by Shim'on Peres.

Meretz Minister Yosi Sarid said that it hurts him to see that the gap between Peres and Netanyahu is so small.

SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] leader Arye Der'i said his party took a chance when it did not announce the candidate it supports prior to the premiership elections.

NRP [National Religious Party] leader Zvulun Hammer said he does not rule out the possibility of joining a coalition set up by Shim'on Peres.

Third Way member Yehuda Har'el said his movement will join only a coalition that pledges to observe the principles to which his party is committed and will not settle for a promise to hold a referendum.

Dr. 'Azmi Bisharah, head of the Arab Democratic Party-United Arab List, said the fact that the Israeli Arabs rallied en masse in support of Peres forces Labor to address the political aspirations of the Arabs.

HADASH MK Tamar Gozansky said she hopes Peres will succeed in forming a government based on Meretz,

HADASH, and perhaps one of the ultra-Orthodox parties or the immigrant party.

Natan Sharansky, head of Yisra'el Ba'aliya, said he is happy about his party's great achievement.

All the speakers noted that they were reacting to exit poll results and not official returns.

A total of 79.7 percent of the population voted in the Knesset elections. This was reported by our correspondent Ya'el Ben-Yehuda, citing official Central Elections Committee data. This is 2.3 percent more than in the previous elections. Approximately 80 percent of the Jewish public took part in the vote, 2 percent more than in the last elections, and some 77.5 percent of the non-Jews voted, which is approximately 8 percent more than last time. The highest turnout rate was registered in Judea and Samaria settlements, where 89.4 percent of the eligible voters cast their ballots.

Israel: Netanyahu Addresses Supporters, Says Must 'Not Lose Hope'

TA2905222496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
2156 GMT 29 May 96

[Address by Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu to the Likud-Gesher-Tzomet election gathering at the Israel Fairgrounds Center in Tel Aviv — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] My friend, David Levi; our friend and election campaign manager, Yitzhaq Mordekhay; friends: It is still early, the night is young, and we must arm ourselves with patience. We do not have the final results yet. This is a very close race. We must primarily wait patiently, not lose hope, and wait with nerves of steel and a cool head.

Although it is still early, two things are clear: First, a very large part of this nation supports our path to bring true peace and security and to defend Jerusalem. [applause] Second, which is also clear as day, is the great job done by all of you: the activists, the volunteers, all of you here, and the thousands outside this hall. You have done a great job. You worked day and night, brought the people out, convinced them, talked to them. You worked hard, and I want to take this opportunity to tell you: I love you! I am proud of you! I salute you!

Israel: Baraq Said Seeking Party Leadership, Unity Government

TA3005072696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0655 GMT 30 May 96

[Telephone conversation with correspondent Sefi Handler, at Tel Aviv's Dan Hotel, and announcer Razi Barqay in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Handler] Good morning, Razi. Ehud Baraq, Avraham Shohat, and Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer met at the Dan Hotel this morning. They are concerned about the future and are, if we understand correctly, setting up an axis centered around Ehud Baraq who will try to seize the party leadership and probably strive to establish a national unity government, in which situation Baraq will naturally be the senior Labor representative.

[Barqay] Are you implying that a putsch against Shim'on Peres is under way?

[Handler] I do not know whether it is a putsch, and I do not think the axis is anti-Peres. I believe it is aimed against Hayim Ramon.

Israel: Peres Said 'Furious' With Baraq Action; Labor Leaders Meet

TA3005092996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0830 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres was furious with the reports on action by Ministers Baraq, Ben-Eli'ezer, and Shohat aimed at the possibility of Labor's joining a unity government headed by Binyamin Netanyahu.

Hayim Ramon refused to comment on the report, but noted: I do not think they really want us in the unity government.

Speaking at a meeting with party leaders this morning, Shim'on Peres said he will wait for the announcement of the final results before reacting, and that lessons should be learned.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 30 May adds that "the Labor meeting did not address the possibility of joining a unity government or the significance of the party's defeat in the elections."]

Israel: Labor Figures See U.S. Pressure Leading to Bloc With Likud

TA3005112396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1100 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Labor Party figures do not rule out the possibility of the party's joining a unity

government, if invited by the Likud chairman. These figures told our correspondent Yaron Deqel that they believe the United States will apply heavy pressure on Netanyahu to continue the peace process, and if negotiations with the Palestinians are to continue, albeit more slowly, a Labor-Likud partnership may be forged under certain conditions.

Israel: Geshet's Levi Says Bloc To Remain United 'No Matter What'

TA2905230096 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
2200 GMT 29 May 96

[Address by Geshet leader David Levi to the Likud-Geshet-Tzomet election gathering at the Israel Fairgrounds Center in Tel Aviv — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] My friends; the head of our list and our candidate for the premiership, my friend, Bibi Netanyahu; our friend, the head of the election campaign committee, Yitzhaq Mordekhay; Knesset members; heads of party branches; heads of local councils; dear activists: We are awaiting the real results and should exercise patience. We have hours of waiting ahead of us. The gap is not big, and a turnabout can most definitely take place. I would like to say only that we united and did our best for the sake of our ideas and to stand together on the basic national issues that are vital for the nation.

We saw this in the field. Our activists worked, toiled, sweated, and acted. I saw them everywhere today. They worked with all their heart, as a single body united and unique in its faith. This unity was, is, and will be a source of hope for many people in this nation. We rose to prove that the affairs of the state, the future of the state and the nation are dearer to us than anything else. We rose as a single bloc with a single idea and presented one candidate, for better or for worse. We are together no matter what. From here, I am telling all our activists, followers, and those who believe in us: Just as we got together to face the challenge, so will we intently wait together today with our eyes set on the future. The light is yet to come. I believe that our path is correct.

Dear friends, whatever happens, deep in our hearts our greatest hope is primarily that in the coming hours, when the results are made known, the Israeli nation will have the surprise it is awaiting. Above all, as people who care about the nation and as a united national movement, we would primarily like to thank our voters, activists, and volunteers and say this: Whatever happens, we respect the decision of the voter. This is the lesson we are giving in the basic belief that our path is correct. We will wait with intense hope for the light that will shine tomorrow

morning. This is our hope. Whatever happens, we are together.

Israel: Labor's Ramon Contacts SHAS To Propose Meeting

TA2905233096 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
2300 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Minister Hayim Ramon, Labor's publicity campaign manager, has called SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] leader Arye Der'i and proposed that they meet already tonight in view of the emerging election results.

A group of NRP [National Religious Party] members — Hanan Porat, Hayim Druckman, Sha'ul Yahalom, and Yitzhaq Levi — sent out feelers tonight for the formation of a bloc made up of the NRP, SHAS, and United Torah Jewry on political issues. Knesset Member Yahalom told our correspondent Yuval Yo'az that the idea is that such a bloc could approach the elected prime minister — probably Shim'on Peres — and propose a compromise on political and religious issues. According to Yahalom, the NRP would be the first to join such a bloc. The television exit polls gave the NRP at least nine Knesset seats.

Minister Yosi Sarid, Meretz leader, said that his party's expected achievement — nine or perhaps 10 Knesset seats — is clear proof that there is a God. Sarid phoned Prime Minister Peres tonight and expressed his certainty that after the vote count ends, it will be clear that Peres has been elected prime minister. Our correspondent Pe'erli Shahar remarks that the two have not yet discussed a meeting to start coalition negotiations.

Natan Sharansky, whose party is one of the biggest surprises of these elections and expects some seven Knesset seats, refused to comment on whether his party would join a Peres-led coalition.

The rally at the Likud election headquarters at the Israel Fairgrounds Center in Tel Aviv dispersed about an hour ago. [passage omitted]

Only a handful of supporters are still sitting in the Labor election headquarters at the Cinerama Hall in Tel Aviv, but Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will not arrive there tonight.

Israel: Netanyahu's Pledge to Right-Wing Parties Reported

TA3005080996 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
0700 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu, who won the elections according to the vote

count so far, told the leaders of the ultra-Orthodox parties that he will not establish a unity government without their consent. Our correspondent Yaron Degel notes that he made this pledge in the course of preelection contacts that were designed to secure the ultra-Orthodox parties' support. The Likud chairman told these parties' leaders that he would set up a coalition with the Likud's natural partners before approaching Labor. Netanyahu's remarks were imparted to Qol Yisra'el by Likud Knesset Member Ehud Olmert, who was interviewed by our correspondent this morning. Olmert refused to state whether his party would invite Shim'on Peres to join the government and noted that he would not counsel Netanyahu via a radio program. Olmert refused to disclose his views on the future of the process with the Palestinians, including the Hebron redeployment.

Likud Director General Yvet Liberman and Netanyahu's aides this morning arrived at the Hilton Tel Aviv Hotel, where the Likud leader is staying. Liberman told our correspondent Dani Zaqen that Netanyahu will make no statement until accurate election results are announced. Our correspondent notes that after the shift in his favor was recorded last night, Netanyahu spoke with leaders of right-wing and religious parties. The talks are still going on.

Israel: Eytan—Oslo Agreements 'Have To Be Reopened'

TA3005091796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0830 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tzomet Chairman Refa'el Eytan says the Oslo agreements have to be reopened, because his camp's outlook differs from that of the people who signed them. We have a right to reevaluate them, he said.

Refa'el Eytan added that Netanyahu should first establish a national camp government, and only later explore the possibility of inviting Labor.

Israel: Peres Categorically Denies Rumors About 'Not Feeling Well'

TA2905141496 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1400 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Shim'on Peres has categorically denied rumors spread in the past few hours to the effect that he was not feeling well. In a phone conversation with our correspondent Udi Segal, Peres described Knesset Member Avraham Ravitz [of United Torah Jewry's Degel Hatora component], who asked journalists how Peres was feeling, as a liar of the first magnitude and said he was feeling excellent. Peres phoned

Ravitz, accused him of spreading false rumors about him, and told him: It is from yours, the ultra-Orthodox community, that Yig'al 'Amir came. Do you want a coalition with Yig'al 'Amir and Kakh?

Israel: Voting Statistics Show Unprecedented Turnout Among Arabs

TA3005095996 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 30 May 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] With the closing of the ballots, it transpired that 79.7 percent of the electorate had exercised their right to vote. If we consider the fact that approximately 10 percent of the citizens eligible to vote were abroad on election day, then we are talking about an international record: Approximately 90 percent of eligible voters who were in Israel yesterday exercised their right to vote.

This data is true with regard to the 3,135,000 voters who voted until 2200 [1900 GMT]. At many polling stations, voters were still standing in line at this time. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 30 May in a page-15 report by Yo'av Limor and Amir Gilat notes that "the Labor Party lobbied for the Arab vote with unprecedented fervor yesterday. Starting from the afternoon, when Labor leaders heard that the voting turnout among the Arab public was very low and could cost Shim'on Peres the election, the party took emergency steps that eventually led to an amazing 77.1 percent turnout among Arab voters, the highest turnout since the establishment of the state. In the last elections, approximately 69 percent of Israeli Arabs voters exercised their right. What began as a low turnout during the day and throughout the afternoon turned into a veritable pilgrimage to the ballot boxes during the peak hours between 2000 and 2200. In the evening, rumors that Netanyahu had won spread in Arab settlements and contributed to the high turnout."]

Israel: Hebron Mayor Seeks Immediate Redeployment; Settlers 'Happy'

TA3005100396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0920 GMT 30 May 96

[Report by Gay Qotev in Hebron]

[FBIS Translated Text] We met happy people in the Jewish Quarter of Hebron and in Qiryat Arba' today. The Jewish settlement's future in the city of the patriarchs may be linked to the election results more than any other Israeli location. No'am Arnon, spokesman for the city's Jewish settlement, now sees a rosy future ahead:

[Begin Arnon recording] We hope the next government will lift the strangling noose on our settlement and allow the Jews here to build and develop like any other place and that it will become a big settlement of hundreds or thousands of families that will be a blessing to itself and its surrounding. [end recording]

Hebron Mayor Mustafa al-Natshah says: We are disappointed with the results of the elections in Israel which show that only a minority of Israelis support the peace process. Al-Natshah demands that the future Israeli Government quickly implement the Hebron redeployment plans. He fears that a Netanyahu-led government will not do so, and he therefore demands that Prime Minister Shim'on Peres meet his obligations by evacuating Hebron in the coming days. He has sufficient time to do it before a new government is established, al-Natshah told us.

[Begin al-Natshah recording, in English] I expect that Mr. Peres will do the redeployment in the coming few days, because he committed himself, and he promised that he will do it after the election. So he has a period that he still remains as prime minister, and he can implement what is agreed upon and fulfill what he promised. [end recording]

Israel: Likud MK Says Agreement on Hebron Pullout Must Be Honored

TA3005120096 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1130 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud Knesset Member [MK] Me'ir Shitrit has said that the Likud government must honor the agreements made by the Labor government and pull out of Hebron. Binyamin Netanyahu must also meet face to face with Yasir 'Arafat, Shitrit stressed.

Israel: Arab Official Rejects Claims on Premiership Voting

TA3005113396 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1100 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Musa Hasadiyah, director of Labor's election campaign in the Arab sector, rejects claims made by party elements to the effect that a large number of Arab voters cast a blank slip for the premiership elections, thus bringing about Shim'on Peres' failure. Hasadiyah says the Arab sector contributed 95 percent of its votes to Shim'on Peres, out of which only 10,000-15,000 votes were disqualified blank slips.

Israel: Editorial Criticizes Clinton's 'Intolerable' Interference

TA3005095896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 30 May 96 p 8

[Editorial: "Clinton's Intervention"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] No nation likes intervention in its internal affairs. But the relationship between the US and Israel has been unique, and a certain amount of American involvement in Israel's election campaign has always been taken in stride. Nor is it surprising that Washington should consistently favor the Labor Party, whose views seem closest to its own.

In the 1950s, Labor represented a pro-Western ideology, opposed to the pro-Soviet orientation of ultra-leftist MAPAM [United Workers Party]. And after the Six Day War, Labor has been viewed as the more accommodating party in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Unlike its main opponent the Likud, it advocated a "land-for-peace" solution, which in principle is close to the American view.

That is why it was not at all surprising that the Bush administration did its best to help Labor four years ago. By linking US loan guarantees to Israel's settlement policies, it made sure that Israeli voters knew they would not get the money unless they elected Yitzhaq Rabin and Labor.

But at no time in the almost 50 years of the state's existence — during which 10 presidents have served in Washington — has an American president put the power and prestige of the Oval Office behind one Israeli candidate as Bill Clinton has done in supporting Shim'on Peres. As one prominent Washington observer put it, "This administration is truly committed to the Labor government, and radiates the feeling that much has been achieved and much hangs in the balance."

Unfortunately, Clinton has not confined his support to a personal endorsement of Peres. Departing from all diplomatic norms, he implied that those who do not vote for Labor, namely half of Israel's population (and a majority of its Jews), are opposed to peace. "I want the people of Israel to know they have to make a decision whether they want to pursue the peace process or not," Clinton said. "If they decide to stay on the path of peace, we will share the risk."

It is difficult to believe that Clinton truly thinks that supporters of Likud do not want to stay on the path of peace, but that is what he clearly implies. His promise to help a Peres-led government by minimizing "the risks taken for peace" is interference enough. That he also found it necessary to imply that those who do not

believe in the current peace process are opposed to peace, borders on the intolerable.

Israel: SHAS Victory Seen as 'Breakthrough,' Blow to Rabbi Schach

TA3005115096 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 30 May 96 p 15

[Commentary by Professor Menahem Friedman: Rabbi 'Ovadya Beat Rabbi Schach by a Knockout"]

[FBIS Translated Text] SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim], which took a significant bite out of the secular-traditional-Sephardic public is the big surprise of the elections. This is thanks to Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef. SHAS' success is the failure of the Likud and Rabbi Schach [religious mentor of the Telem Emuna movement].

If the television exit polls are accurate, I am amazed by two things. First, there is the NRP's [National Religious Party] rise in power, which is greater than was expected. The developments in the ultra-Orthodox sector, however, are more important. SHAS increased its strength by three Knesset seats, which is very interesting. This happened despite all the dire predictions that SHAS was in a crisis and despite the fact that Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef remained silent with regard to his political preferences until the last minute, refusing to cave in to the pressure to openly support Netanyahu although it was manifestly clear that he privately backed Peres. This is simply a breakthrough.

SHAS has burst onto the secular scene. It is gaining ground among the secular-traditional-Sephardic public. SHAS' upsurge is the failure of the Likud and of the integration process in Israeli society. If SHAS increased its power in peripheral settlements, and not in Bene Beraq and Jerusalem — something which is not at all certain — then this means that Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef has pulled off the unbelievable.

SHAS' triumph also spells defeat for Rabbi Schach. According to the exit polls, Rabbi 'Azran's Telem Emuna movement did not manage to get into the Knesset. This movement's *raison d'être*, according to Rabbi Schach, was to strike at SHAS. This constitutes a political reversal that simply astounds me.

As for the other religious parties: Agudat Yisra'el, by retaining the same number of Knesset seats, actually lost strength. I anticipate great tension between the members of Degel Hatorah and Agudat Yisra'el [the two factions that make up United Torah Jewry].

The NRP regained the standing it enjoyed in the past before its voters abandoned it for the Likud. The religious-Zionist public grew stronger all the time, but part of its votes went to the Likud, Tzomet, or Moledet. In these elections, if the exit polls are correct, the greater part of this public has simply returned home, to the NRP.

**Jordan: Minister on Impact of Oil-for-Food Deal,
Inter-Arab Trade**

MM3005090996 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
28 May 96 p 9

[Report on interview with Jordanian Minister of Trade and Industry 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib by Salah Hazin in Amman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordanian Minister of Trade and Industry 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib has stated that he expects trade activity between Iraq and Jordan to increase following the signing of the "Oil for Food" agreement between Iraq and the United Nations last week.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH, Abu-al-Raghib said that the Jordanian private sector will inevitably benefit from the partial lifting of the economic embargo on Iraq and the permission for Iraq to sell part of its oil to purchase the food and medicines it needs.

He affirmed that this benefit will cover the fields of medicine and food industries, such as vegetable oil, of which Jordanian plants used to export large quantities to Iraq. The same applies to the field of detergents and other cleansing materials.

The Jordanian minister said: "The benefits to Jordan will also cover the field of transit trade, as the port of Aqaba is still the main port through which Iraq can import goods and commodities, which are later transported by trucks to Iraqi territory."

He said that he expects the major part of the trade exchange between Jordan and Iraq to take place outside the framework of the trade protocol that exists between the two countries, the volume of which has dropped to half what it used to be. Jordan decided at the beginning of this year to cut by 50 percent the volume of its exports to Iraq under the trade protocol concluded between the two countries. Indeed, the volume of trade under the protocol dropped from about \$400 million to less than \$200 million per year.

The minister told AL-HAYAH, during an interview he gave to the paper on the fringes of the seminar on "The Role of the Private Sector in Arab Development of the Arab Economies," which he was attending, that the volume of trade has been fixed and that any activity that will exceed the limit set for the protocol will be carried out outside its framework. He said that Jordan remains the sole outlet for Iraq onto the outside world.

Abu-al-Raghib called for the creation of a rejuvenating Arab economic organization, in which the business sector would form the pivot and play the leading role, and which would be bolstered by an Arab economic

climate based on common interest and on a true partnership in development in which the private sector would constitute an Arab party capable of dealing with the process of involvement in the world economy.

He said: "The proposed organization should concentrate its work on business establishments in the Arab world and should follow a course that would move Arab trade from the stage of inter-Arab trade to one that would avoid isolation and move forward, with a new concept, toward a joint Arab trade. He called for exploiting the relatively large Arab markets before venturing into outside markets. [no closing quotemarks as published]

Abu-al-Raghib based his call for the establishment of the proposed Arab economic organization on the fact that the Arab private sector has failed so far to play the role it ought to have played, except for a short exceptional period toward the end of the seventies and the eighties.

He pointed out that joint cooperation centered on meetings and piled-up resolutions that were formulated during Arab summit conferences, ministerial meetings, and conferences of experts held during the past three decades.

He called for an increase in the ratio of inter-Arab trade from its present modest level, which does not exceed 9 percent of the total volume of trade with the world, so as to reach better levels forming the basis for the success of the investment movement itself. [passage omitted]

**Jordan: Paper 'Concerned' About Likud Victory in
Israeli Elections**

JN3005111896 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
30 May 96 p 21

["News Analysis" by the political editor: "What Concerns Us in Israeli Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli elections are an internal affair which only concerns the Israelis as long as they address the right of the people—any people—to choose their leadership and political system, and also as long as they address the internal dimensions and reflections of the Jewish state.

This is not the case, however, as far as the Arab-Israeli peace process is concerned, and also as far as the future Israeli commitments toward the peace process with its various aspects and dimensions are concerned.

However, the Israeli elections are a regional issue as far as Israel's withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 borders on all fronts is concerned. They are a regional issue as far as the Palestinians' legitimate rights, led by the right to return to their homeland, the right to self-determination,

and the right to the establishment of their independent state, are concerned.

Moreover, these elections are a regional issue because of the problem of more than one million displaced persons who have resided in Egypt and Jordan since 1967, and the more than four million refugees scattered throughout the world.

The Israeli elections are a vital regional issue because of the issue of the region's water and resources and the usurped rights regarding underground and ground water and the border and international rivers.

These elections are also an Islamic, Christian, regional, and world issue as far as Jerusalem—the first of the two qiblahs [the direction to which Muslims turn their heads when praying], the third holy mosque, and the town of Jesus Christ—is concerned.

Therefore, we are concerned about the results of these elections because we are concerned about the destiny of the peace process and because we are interested in a just and comprehensive peace based on returning usurped rights to their owners.

We are concerned about the Israeli elections and their results. We, however, are not concerned about specific persons or parties, although we naturally realize that certain persons and parties in Israel are associated with certain policies and programs and that any Israeli who is closest to a just and lasting peace is the one we favor.

We are aware that the Israeli rightwing—with its intensive settlement activities, its repeated calls for freezing the peace process at the point reached by the Labor government, its insistence on refusing to discuss the Jerusalem and Golan issues, and its rejection of the repatriation rights of displaced Palestinians and refugees—is an obstacle to the peace process. The Israeli rightwing may cause further cold wars or real wars.

However, we will not exempt the Israeli rightwing from the responsibility of commitment to the international

agreements signed by the Arabs and Israel. We will not exempt the whole world, particularly the states sponsoring the Madrid conference, from their responsibility toward bringing about a no-war, no-peace state if the ballots bring the rightwing to power in Israel for the next four years.

We are also aware that the Labor Party's return to head the coming Israeli Government will not reverse our list of priorities. What concerns us in these elections is Israel's continued response to the requirements of the peace process whether Peres wins and heads a coalition with a small majority or whether the new Knesset prompts him to forge a coalition with political spectra lying on the right side of the Labor Party in the Israeli political map.

We will not be dragged behind the host of masked diplomatic expressions which conceal our concern about what is taking place in Israel. We will not be content with saying that we will deal with any coming Israeli Government and that's all.

Yes, we are concerned about the Israeli community's weak "readiness" for peace. Yes, we are concerned about the progress scored by the camp of rightwing and extremism in the Jewish state, regardless of its size and limits. In the past few months, Israel and its Labor government enjoyed international and regional support that went beyond imagination. However, I believe that the impact of the peace camps inside the Israeli "body" is so limited that the "Arab vote" seemed less decisive than we thought.

The "balance of horror" between the two scales of the Israeli equation will keep the peace process and the region swinging until the peoples in the region—supported by the international community—manage to break the Israeli balances in favor of the peace option.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Returns From Brussels Talks on Reconstruction

NC2905165896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1530 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri is working to speed up the formation of the consultative committee mentioned in the April cease-fire understanding. This afternoon he returned to Beirut from Paris, where he stopped over on his way back from a one-day visit to Brussels. Al-Hariri met in Brussels with the European Commission president and his deputy. They discussed the working mechanism of the consultative committee on the reconstruction of Lebanon, which was mentioned in the July understanding.

Sources in the Lebanese delegation that accompanied the prime minister described the meeting as extremely important. They said al-Hariri told the European officials that he intends to continue contacts with countries that can help Lebanon's reconstruction plan. The sources cited the prime minister as saying that he will continue his contacts with and visits to the concerned countries to determine their contributions to the reconstruction plan. Al-Hariri was accompanied on his visit by the minister of state for financial affairs, the director general of the Council of Ministers, the president of the Development and Reconstruction Council, and some advisers.

Lebanon: Hizballah—Al-Hariri Seeks To 'Frustrate' Resistance Spirit

NC2905181296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1615 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A Hizballah media source has replied to a comment by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri's information office. The source called on al-Hariri to act as a man responsible for all Lebanese. It is not in al-Hariri's interest to antagonize any Lebanese group, or to deal with any of them only out of personal advantage, the Hizballah source said. The Hizballah reply also says: The Lebanese Resistance has never claimed an exclusive right to confront the Zionist occupation. But the prime minister's policy, which seeks to frustrate the spirit of resistance in the Lebanese people and to dissolve the institutions and activities of the civil society, is one of the factors that prevent most of the Lebanese forces from engaging seriously and effectively in the resistance.

The Hizballah media source adds: Hizballah's strong showing in the field of resistance does not make the party ignore or forget the sacrifices, heroism, and the qualitative operations carried out by other resistance factions and parties. Indeed, it makes the party shoulder

greater responsibility. The distinction which the prime minister made between the resistance and Hizballah concerns al-Hariri himself and does not harm Hizballah. Indeed, it shows the hostile political background from which Prime Minister al-Hariri proceeds to try to weaken the resistance.

The reply goes on: Hizballah rejects Prime Minister al-Hariri and his employees claiming an exclusive right to the Lebanese state. This claim is the reason for al-Hariri's isolation from the Lebanese people. The people reject al-Hariri's plan, which empties the state of its content, demolishes state institutions, and establishes parallel personal institutions. [passage omitted]

A number of officials have entered this war of words. Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul said the resistance must not be linked to any specific group, party, or even a trend. He said: We must not show disagreements after the Israeli aggression and thus help this aggression achieve its objectives now that we have overcome the major ordeal. He said this is not the time for us to say: This or that person must go learn political manners.

Transport Minister 'Umar Misqawi said the government's policy toward resistance is clear and needs no comment. He said resisting the occupation is not a monopoly by anyone, but an invitation to every citizen. He added: No group or party should replace the resistance and speak on its behalf.

Minister 'Abd-al-Rahim Murad regretted Shaykh Nasrallah's statement and urged caution against positions that may take Lebanon back to the time of conflicts, differences, and sensitivities. Sami al-Khatib, chairman of the Chamber of Deputies' Defense Committee, hoped political dialogue will not decline to this level. He said no one can deny the positions of the officials, especially the government and its head [toward resistance]. He urged that the lessons learned from the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon be remembered.

Lebanon: Hizballah Deputy on Elections, Relations With al-Hariri

MM3005082996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 27 May 96 p 5

[Report on interview with Lebanese Deputy Muhammad Ra'd, chairman of the Hizballah Political Council, by Ibrahim 'Awad in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Muhammad Ra'd, chairman of the Political Council of the Hizballah Party, in an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, rejected even the mere raising of the idea of extending the term of the present Lebanese Chamber of Deputies because of unforeseen conditions dictating such an extension. He

said that the aim behind making the Lebanese people believe that these conditions or such matters exist and preparing public opinion to accept such a claim is to promote sectarian electoral purposes.

Ra'd affirmed that the parliamentary elections will take place and all the political parties and candidates are preparing to contest them. He expressed support for the proposal made by Walid Junblatt, Lebanese minister for refugee affairs, about holding the elections in Jabal Lubnan area on the basis of districts and not on the basis of provinces, and said that this was not the only exception, alluding by this to the Province of the South which was merged with al-Nabatiyah [province] thus reducing the number of provinces to five whereas it was previously six (Beirut, the North, al-Jabal, al-Biq'a, the South, and al-Nabatiyah).

Replying to the statement by Patriarch Nasrallah Sufayr that the exception pertaining to al-Jabal province [of holding elections on the basis of districts and not provinces] would, if carried out, constitute a "seditious plan," Ra'd said that the state's adoption of the proposal made by the party's deputies in parliament (al-Wafa' Bloc for Resistance) which call for the holding of elections on the basis of small constituencies, which would divide every province into two while preserving the characteristics of the province of the capital, would be bound to alleviate the fears raised by the patriarch.

Deputy Ra'd said that changing the places of some of the naturalized people, in contradiction with their registered records, could have been made for electoral reasons. He pointed out that Hizballah was not concerned in this issue.

Deputy Ra'd declared that he was not surprised at the failure to form the supervisory committee provided for by the "April entente" and he attributed this failure to the difficult electoral position of (Israeli Prime Minister) Shim'on Peres, which does not enable him to form such a committee, which would have the task of pinpointing and punishing the side that violates the "April entente," because of his conviction that Israel alone would be considered the guilty side.

Ra'd pointed out that Hizballah will leave the question of dealing with any violations committed by the Israeli side to the Lebanese Government, affirming in the meantime his support for it in any moves it takes in this regard on the ground that it is the one concerned with the "April entente." But he added that he reserves the right to respond to any Israeli attacks on civilians in Lebanon. He added: "We are ready to defend ourselves by any means, from Katyushas to other means." Ra'd asked why Israel's violation of the "April entente" was

allowed to go unpunished, which destroys this entente and renders it meaningless in the future.

Asked about the reported coolness in relations between Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and the Hizballah Party, a delegation of which had called on Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies Nabih Birri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, but which has not held any meetings with Prime Minister al-Hariri since before the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, Ra'd said: "Meeting with Prime Minister al-Hariri does not create any problem. But al-Hariri has not settled in Lebanon yet, as he is still engaged in shuttle tours which we hope will be in the interest of the country." Ra'd said that the meeting with the prime minister will take place when conditions permit it and described his relations with al-Hariri as "quiet."

Ra'd replied to the official criticism of the Iranian aid that is sent to the Hizballah Party without due consideration to the Lebanese State institutions and said that Iranian Housing Minister Abbas Akhundi had recently visited Lebanon and asked the senior Lebanese officials to specify the type and form of the required aid from Iran and that Iran is, he believes, still awaiting the Lebanese reply.

As to the aid received by the Hizballah Party, he said: "It comes to us from popular institutions and societies and from the Iranian people and this aid was specifically assigned to Hizballah."

As to the rumored escalation of intra-Shiite conflict in Lebanon following Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah's proclamation of himself as a point of reference and the refusal by another large section of the Shiite community to accept this proclamation, Ra'd said that never in its history did the Shiite sect witness any unity of endeavors.

He added that the diversity and multiplicity of religious interpretation are all signs of ideological and jurisprudential excellence. I do not believe that interpretation efforts by one person weaken the interpretation efforts of another, he added.

The religious Shiite masses are fully aware that religious interpretation cannot be confined to one person and that it is the leadership alone that has such power.

Lebanon: SLA Admits 2 Members Killed in Hizballah Attack

NC2905150196 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two South Lebanese Army [SLA] soldiers were martyred this morning when an

explosive charge planted by the terrorists went off in Dayr Syrian in the western sector of the border area. The Hizballah terrorist organization claimed responsibility for the attack.

Lebanon: Blast Targets Israeli Patrol, Wounds 5
NC3005105796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1015 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reports from the Marj 'Uyun area, an explosion has targeted an Israeli patrol. Initial reports indicate that there are five casualties among the patrol personnel. Immediately afterwards, the Israeli army cordoned off the area and began machine-gunning nearby areas.

Syria: Minister Denies Meeting Israeli Official Aboard Plane*JN2905125896 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic
28 May 96 p 11*

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to a question by a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY correspondent, Industry Minister Ahmad Nizam al-Din denied that he met with the director general of the Israeli Trade and Industry Ministry aboard the plane that carried him from Brussels after attending the European-Mediterranean partnership conference, which was held in the Belgian capital on 21-22 May.

This completely unfounded report was broadcast by the Israeli radio yesterday evening. It is part of the disinformation constantly exercised by the Israeli media.

Syria: Israeli Election Campaigns Ignored Need for 'Just' Peace*JN2905173596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 29 May 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab-Israeli conflict and its impact on regional and world peace and security, as well as the position of the Israeli Government on all this, give special importance to today's Israeli elections. It is noticeable that the Israeli election campaigns focused on ideas such as maintaining occupation, aggression, and spreading hegemony. At the same time, the campaigns ignored peace requirements such as respecting the international legitimacy resolutions and ensuring rights to land and sovereignty. They also ignored the need for a just and comprehensive peace and focused on Israel's own version of peace. Some of these ideas even called for peace from a position of strength and for holding on to the occupied territories and rejecting Palestinian rights. They also stressed the desire to spread hegemony.

Such an attitude amounts to a call for war and not peace. Those, who want to achieve peace for their people without recognizing the rights of the other side to land and sovereignty, are destroying peace and fanning the fire of war. Peace in the region cannot be for only one party. Peace that is not based on the rights of all parties is a distorted peace and will not meet the demands of the region's people or the desire of the international community to achieve a firm peace based on justice and the UN resolutions.

The Israelis will commit a big mistake if they believe the region can be governed by Israel's military power. This region is governed by a number of historical, geographic, demographic, cultural, ideological, economic, and international factors, which further complicate the

conflict, but which make the effective forces think objectively of saving the region and the world from the whirlpool of violence and wars. This proved to be true when the Madrid conference convened and stressed the international legitimacy and its resolutions and the principle of land for peace.

Syria did not go to the Madrid conference from a position of weakness. It went because it was concerned about peace in the region, and because it believed that the bases of the conference constituted a common denominator that was sufficient to achieve peace. The Israelis, who are basing their calculations and concepts of regional peace on the positions of some Arab regimes, are like the ostrich which buries its head in the sand to avoid the storm. Peace, which is not fair and comprehensive, will remain threatened with explosion and all kinds of danger.

Syria has always attached importance to the Madrid terms of reference and the Security Council's resolutions, on which the U.S. initiative was based from the beginning—an initiative which calls for exchanging land for peace. The call by some Israeli leaders for holding on to the settlements and the occupied Arab territories in the Golan and southern Lebanon or any other occupied land will create further tension in the region. Syria, through its leader, has always called for peace and not war—a peace that will restore all rights and which does not harm sovereignty. It also believes that peace will prevail only if the Israelis respect its bases, which will restore the land and ensure reciprocal [mutabadal] and equal [mutasawi] security for all parties, and if they abandon their desire for domination, expansion, and show of force.

Such a policy only leads to violence and counterviolence and to bloodshed instead of stability, security, and development under the canopy of true peace, which will guarantee the rights of all parties and which people want to protect and respect as it represents their interests and not the interests and ambitions Israel is harboring at the expense of the Arabs, the region's nations, and world security.

Therefore, the United States, in its capacity as a sponsor and partner, and the effective international forces should emphasize their credibility and that of the United Nations, and should respect and apply the UN resolutions in a fair way in order to save the peace process, the region, and world security from dangers, which will serve nobody, and which will result in new wars and tragedies.

Syria: TISHRIN Warns Against Israel's 'New Jerusalem' Proposal

JN2705105196 Damascus SANA in Arabic
0735 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 27 May (SANA)—TISHRIN warns of the danger of the Israeli proposal to construct a new Jerusalem which aims at depriving the Palestinian people and Muslims of Jerusalem and entrenching the Israeli claim that Jerusalem is its unified and eternal capital.

In its "Opinion" column today, the newspaper says the Israeli proposal is part of the continuous Israeli Government's attempts to evade discussing the future status of Jerusalem and impose its full control on this Arab city, which is holy to both Arab Muslims and Christians.

The newspaper notes the measures adopted by the Israeli authorities since 1967 to Judaize Jerusalem and change its geographic, historical, and demographic features. It says Israel has not succeeded in eliminating the Arab presence in this holy city despite of all the occupation forces' practices against the Arabs even at prayer times at the holy al-Aqsa Mosque. The paper says that this is strong evidence of the firm rejection of conceding the Arab nature of Jerusalem and its Arab and Islamic identity that goes back hundreds of years.

Concluding the article, TISHRIN emphasizes that the Palestinian people who offered thousands of martyrs during the confrontations of the heroic intifadah in addition to the thousands of prisoners in Israeli jails, will not relinquish Jerusalem and their legitimate national rights. It says the Palestinian people are ready to offer more sacrifices in order to restore their usurped rights.

Syria: Paper Says Plans To Partition Iraq 'Failed'

JN3005073896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 30 May 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Israeli Hissing and the Arab Echoing," TISHRIN discusses the campaign of animosity and falsehood against Syria which is organized by Zionist writers and journalists,

who are instigating Israel to launch aggression against Syria and to form alliances against it.

TISHRIN brings to mind the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the failure of its objectives. It also recalls that the efforts to isolate Syria also failed. TISHRIN also brings to mind Syria's position on the peace process since the Madrid conference and the fact that Israel placed obstacles to the peace process.

The paper says: Through long and bitter experiences, the U.S. and Israeli officials reached the firm conclusion that Syria is the key to comprehensive peace in the region and that security and stability in the region cannot be guaranteed without Damascus.

TISHRIN adds: The entire world now realizes the importance of the Syrian role in the region. It seems that certain parties do not like this fact. They, therefore, began to coordinate their efforts with Zionist diehards to encroach on Syria's position and to instigate others against it. They even became, on several occasions, a center of advise and expertise for Israel and the enemies of the Arab nation to fabricate more falsehoods against Syria and the Arabs.

TISHRIN adds: Their expertise and efforts were of no avail. The plans to partition Iraq and push it into the Israeli sphere of influence also failed.

TISHRIN says: At any rate, the voices of the Zionist diehards, which are being echoed by some officials in the region, will not change Syria's position. Damascus was the target of more ruthless campaigns in the past. It, however, remained faithful to its pan-Arab principles, defending the Arab nation's rights, dignity, and future. It will continue the struggle to provide the necessary requirements for a just and comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN concludes: We truly hoped that Zionist rancorous voices against Syria and the Arabs would not be echoed by Arabs. We also hoped that efforts would be exerted to maintain what remained of the ties of kinship and closeness among the Arabs instead of directing efforts to sever these ties, provide secret channels for the Zionist octopus to enter into the Arab homeland, jump into the Zionists' lap, and seek to implement its plans and promote its racist arguments.

Afghanistan**Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Expects To Be Prime Minister Under Rabbani***MM2905153596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
28 May 96 pp 1, 6*

[Unattributed report on interview with Golboddin Hekmatyar in Logman on 24 May: "Hekmatyar Tells AL-HAYAH: The United Nations Has Become Exhausted Here...and Should Get Some Rest!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Logman, Afghanistan — Golboddin Hekmatyar, leader of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan, has affirmed that he has become obliged to defend the capital, Kabul, against any attacks launched on it. He said that for this reason, he will bring in about 30,000 fighters. Indeed, 1,000 combatants of his party have already been deployed alongside the presidential forces.

Hekmatyar was speaking in an interview with AL-HAYAH, held at his headquarters at Logman, east of Kabul, following the signing of the agreement last Friday with President Borhanoddin Rabbani and senior echelons of his regime. But the leader of the Islamic Party refused to fix a date for his entry into the Afghan capital to participate in government. He confined himself to saying that this will happen "within weeks."

He added: "The brothers in Kabul believe that our entry into Kabul has become essential." He pointed out that he shares Rabbani's conviction about the need "for the creation of a strong central government capable of defending the country's unity in the face of the American plans which aim at the partitioning of Afghanistan."

Hekmatyar added that America is not alone in this plan, and that it is supported by other countries in the region. He added: "The creation of a weak Afghanistan does not serve anyone's interests and the plan for the partitioning of Afghanistan is not practical, and therefore it is unlikely to succeed." He expressed his confidence that the country "will remain united politically and socially."

Hekmatyar stressed the need for the establishment of a strong central government in Kabul and at the same time expressed his belief that the neighboring Islamic countries concerned with the Afghan question support this line.

Asked about the attitude of Pakistan, which is accused of supporting the Taliban, he said: "I believe that the Pakistani brothers support the agreement that was concluded between us and President Rabbani. This is because they all realize that war is not in anyone's interest."

Hekmatyar called on the Taliban to join the peace agreement, "because their wars during the past year have proven that they cannot settle the matter militarily." He added: "Following the announcement of the Friday agreement, the Taliban retreated 20 km from the positions they occupied around Kabul. What will happen when we enter the battle militarily on the side of the government?!"

Asked by AL-HAYAH how he envisages Taliban's control of wide areas of Afghanistan will end, he said: "The Taliban movement has its own problems and so it cannot continue except through conquests and victories, since it lacks any political or social background."

Asked if there is any mediation going on between him and the Taliban, he replied: "The United Nations is run by America. So when an American senator visited Afghanistan and advised the replacement of [UN mediator] al-Mestiri, the latter soon got orders to resign so that he would not be dismissed."

Asked what the solution will be, he replied: "We have chosen direct understanding. If there has to be mediation, then let it be by Islamic personalities because the United Nations has become exhausted in Afghanistan and should now rest."

Hekmatyar praised the efforts made by Qazi Hussain Ahmad, leader of the Pakistani Islamic Front, in bringing about the agreement that was signed last week.

Asked if the agreement meant that he will again become prime minister, Hekmatyar replied: "If the agreement means that Rabbani is president of the country, then my answer would be yes, I would become prime minister."

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar To Assume Office in Kabul 'Soon'*BK2905121996 Hong Kong AFP in English
1201 GMT 29 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, May 29 (AFP) — Afghan Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] faction chief Golboddin Hekmatyar will arrive in Kabul soon to assume the office of prime minister, a senior government official said Wednesday.

About a hundred Hezb-e Eslami security troops have already been given control of a building where Hekmatyar will set up his office in the Afghan capital, the official said, preferring anonymity.

He said a joint commission of Hezb and Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society] party of President Borhanoddin Rabbani is expected to finalise "very soon" distribution of ministries between the two sides in the new administration.

Hekmatyar will reach Kabul after the allotment of posts is completed by the commission, in implementation of the political and military cooperation accord signed by the two sides near Kabul on Friday, he said.

The Hezb is "most likely" to get the key portfolios of defence and finance in addition to the prime ministership, while the Jam'iyat-e Eslami will retain the presidency, he said.

Meanwhile, the official said Rabbani had sent a delegation to northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif for talks with Abdol Rashid Dostam on his offer to the Uzbek leader to participate in the planned interim government.

The Hezb-e Eslami's alliance with Rabbani has put it at odds with three other factions which have been its partners in an opposition alliance, called Supreme Coordination Council (SCC).

The three are Dostam's Jonbesh-e Melli, Jabha Nijat-e Melli of former president Sebghatollah Mojaddedi and Shia Hezb-e Wahdat [Unity Party].

Reliable Afghan sources in Pakistan said the Taleban Islamic Militia, which has been besieging Kabul, has invited Mojaddedi and three other factional leaders for talks on forming an anti-Rabbani front. The other invitees to Kandahar, the Taleban base in southern Afghanistan, are Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi of Harkat Enqelab-e Eslami [Islamic Revolution Movement], Yunus Khales of Hezb-e Eslami (Khales group) and Sayed Ahmad Gilani of Mahaz-e Melli. The three leaders have so far remained non-aligned in the Afghan factional conflict, which has claimed more than 25,000 lives in Kabul since the fall of communist rule there in April 1992.

The talks may get under way in the coming days, with Gilani expected to arrive in Kandahar on Monday, the sources said.

Taleban, who control most of Afghanistan, sprang from Koranic schools at the end of 1994. They have vowed to topple Rabbani and establish Islamic law throughout Afghanistan.

Heavy casualties were reported in the latest fighting between Taleban and Rabbani's forces southeast of Kabul last week.

Afghanistan: Weekly—U.S. Responsible for 'Devastating Wars'

LD2805105396 Tehran IRNA in English
0949 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 28 (IRNA) — A Kabul-based weekly wrote in its latest issue that the devastating wars in Afghanistan over the past four years

were the effect of the U.S. plots and its support for the mercenary groups.

The weekly PAYAM-E JIHAD wrote that the regional states, except Tehran, were mercenaries of the United States.

The periodical, which is affiliated to the Islamic Movement Party [Harakat-e Eslami] of Ayatollah Asef Mohseni, wrote that despite the announcement of its impartiality, Washington was directly involved in Afghan affairs.

The paper added that the United States, fearing the Islamic school of thought and because of its enmity with the sovereignty of Afghan strugglers, is trying to negate the establishment of koranic values and principles.

It considered the establishment of Islamic governments in Iran and Afghanistan as the obstacles on the way of realization of U.S. policies aimed at influencing the regional states and central Asia.

Establishment of an Islamic government in Afghanistan, neighboring an Islamic and revolutionary government of Iran, commented the weekly, would endanger interests of the greedy West in the region, a fact which is intolerable for the United States.

Blaming the White House for the formation of the Taleban group, the editorial said that the western [words indistinct] the United States were striving for sovereignty of the West and negation of the Islamic government in Afghanistan.

The weekly called on all the world leaders and Afghan combatants to defuse plots of Islam's treacherous enemies in light of their unity in order to restore peace and security in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Pakistani Politician To Visit Taleban in Kandahar

LD2905124996 (Clandestine) Radio Message of
Freedom in Pashto
to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Qazi Hussain Ahmad [the leader of the Jamaat-i Islami Pakistan] will pay a visit to Kandahar at the head of a religious scholars' delegation. [words indistinct] the report says that after his peace mission to Kabul, the amir of Jamaat-i Islami Pakistan will now visit Kandahar at the head of a religious scholars' delegation to hold talks with the Taleban leaders who are opposed to the government in Kabul. [passage omitted]

India

India: Deve Gowda Meets Front Leaders on Government Formation

BK2905131096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United Front [UF] leader and the prime minister-designate, Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda, has had consultations with the senior front leaders on the formation of his government. The front spokesman, Mr. Jaipal Reddy, says that the steering committee of the UF today held informal discussions on the common minimum program and policies for the new government. The spokesman said the Congress did not impose any conditionalities for the support. He clarified that the UF government is committed to the principles of secularism, federal democracy, social justice, and self-reliance. Mr. Jaipal Reddy says the views expressed by the Congress leaders will be taken into consideration while finalizing the common program. The UF will have consultations with the Congress on floor coordination in parliament.

Replying to a question on the hawala [illegal money transfer] issue, he clarified that the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] will be guided by the directions of the court.

The Congress has ruled out its participation in the UF government. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, told newsmen that senior leaders today discussed how the mode of support to the UF government can be implemented successfully. The meeting was presided over by the party president, Mr. Narasimha Rao. The spokesman said such discussions will continue over the next few days. He said it was decided in today's meeting that the party would stand by the earlier CWC [Congress Working Committee] resolution to that effect. Mr. Gadgil said that Congress will not interfere in any way in the formation of the Deve Gowda ministry at the center. He said Mr. Deve Gowda met Mr. Narasimha Rao this morning and described the talks between them as cordial.

The Asom Gana Parishad [AGP] has decided to extend support to the UF government at the center from outside. According to party sources at Guwahati, the decision was taken at the steering committee meeting of the party. The AGP has five members in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha.

The DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] president and Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr. Karunanidhi, says his party would take a decision tomorrow whether or not to participate in the UF government. He was talking to reporters in Madras today. Mr. Karunanidhi will be arriving in Delhi tomorrow evening to meet the front

leaders and DMK MP's. He said though the DMK has not so far taken any decision on the mode of support to the Deve Gowda government, the party leaders would meet tomorrow to finalize its stand on the issue.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] says that the resignation of Vajpayee government does not imply any political fall for the party. The party president, Mr. Advani, says that the coming together of 13 parties against the BJP has deprived the country of good governance. He told newsmen in New Delhi today that the central parliamentary party of the BJP met this morning and complimented Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee for acquitting himself honorably during the brief period. Mr. Advani said that the BJP as an opposition party will extend full cooperation to the next government for all positive policies and programs.

India: CPI Official Tells AFP Party May Join New Government

BK3005050696 Hong Kong AFP in English 0421 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, May 30 (AFP) — India's oldest communist party is considering joining a coalition government which is to take office on Saturday, [1 June] but a final decision will have to wait until Sunday, a party leader said Thursday.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) does not rule out participation in the United Front coalition following the resignation Tuesday of the country's first Hindu nationalist government.

Communists, who have a limited but committed following in India, have never been part of a government in New Delhi since independence in 1947 although they rule three of the country's 25 states.

"The options are open," CPI deputy general secretary A.B. Bardhan told AFP, as prime minister-designate H.D. Deve Gowda, a centrist, continued talks with the dozen United Front constituents on forming a government.

"There is thinking (in our party) that if the United Front government is to have some credibility, then we cannot keep out of it and just extend support from outside," Bardhan said.

But he said that the CPI, founded in 1925, was constrained by the decision of the dominant Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) and two smaller allies not to join the new government.

"This has complicated the problems for us," he said. "We propose to sort it out" at the two-day meeting of

the CPI's decision-making National Council which will start here on Saturday.

The United Front had initially proposed CPI-M leader Jyoti Basu as prime minister, but he declined the offer, upsetting a section of the party which has been ruling the Indian state of West Bengal since June 1977.

Newspapers said Thursday that Front leader Deve Gowda was still trying to persuade the CPI-M to change its mind and join his government instead of only supporting it from the outside.

The CPI's Bardhan denied newspaper reports that the communists were putting pressure on Deve Gowda not to give the important finance ministry portfolio to Palaniappan Chidambaram, an advocate of free-market reforms.

"These are just stories," Bardhan said. "There are so many claims and counter-claims. Eventually it is the PM-designate who will allocate various portfolios. Even our strong views on any issue won't matter."

Deve Gowda, 63, will take the oath of office at the presidential palace here Saturday at the head of India's third coalition government since 1989 and the second within a fortnight.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) government, which came to power on May 16, resigned Tuesday after failing to muster a majority in the Lok Sabha, the lower house.

The BJP was asked to form a government by President Shankar Dayal Sharma after it finished as the largest party in a hung parliament following general elections but was asked to win a vote of confidence in the house by May 31.

India: 2 Killed in Election-Related Violence in Kashmir

BK2705135396 Hong Kong AFP in English
1338 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, May 27 (AFP) — The bodies of two kidnapped party workers were found near here on Monday [21 May] as a strike called to protest against upcoming parliamentary elections crippled this Kashmir summer capital, police said.

The bodies of Gholam Qadir Gani and Gul Khan, members of the Congress (I) party, were found near the town of Anantnag, a day after they were kidnapped from their homes in the nearby town of Kulgam, police said.

Taj Mahiudin, the Congress candidate from Anantnag constituency, which went to the polls last week, accused

members of a counter-insurgency group backed by India of abducting and murdering the pair.

Anantnag and Baramulla constituencies went to the polls on May 23 in the first parliamentary elections in the strife-torn Kashmir Valley since a Muslim insurgency began seven years ago.

Srinagar and Udhampur district south of here are scheduled to go to the polls on Thursday [30 May] in the final leg of India's staggered general elections.

Shops, offices and other businesses were closed in Srinagar on Monday and there was little traffic on the roads in response to a four-day protest strike called by nine powerful Muslim separatist groups.

Police reported two grenade attacks by Muslim militants in Srinagar and firing in a downtown quarter by suspected rebels but no casualties.

The first general elections in Kashmir in seven years began on May 7. A total of six seats in the Indian parliament are at stake. The second round of balloting on May 23 was marred by charges that Indian troops had coerced recalcitrants to vote, an allegation New Delhi denies.

Residents of this city of some 700,000, where a total of 11 candidates are in the fray, said Monday that they would boycott the elections.

"Nobody knows either the candidates or their symbols," said Tariq Javed, 19, a medical student, adding that he would forego his first vote, because "freedom is the only answer."

Faiyaz Ahmed, a former houseboat owner who sells vegetables at a small kiosk in a Srinagar backlane, said a maximum of five percent of the city's 785,293 voters would cast their ballots willingly.

"If force is used, it will be different of course," he said. "Is this the time to hold elections when so many people are dying?"

There is widespread anger here against many independent candidates and those contesting on tickets with support from pro-Indian militant groups.

An additional 50,000 paramilitary troops and army soldiers have been deployed in Srinagar and Udhampur to pre-empt violence but have failed to prevent stray attacks on candidates, witnesses said.

A convoy carrying Javed Shah, a militant-turned-politician contesting from Srinagar on an Awami League ticket, was attacked by angry crowds in a congested downtown city quarter Monday, but was not injured.

The Awami League party is backed by renegade militant leader Kuka Parray, who is termed an Indian stooge by rebels.

The election campaign formally ends at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday. Campaigning has been dull here although posters plugging the candidates were pasted across the city along with quixotic symbols ranging from a boat to a bow and arrow.

Muslim militants say only a UN-backed referendum to determine the disputed Himalayan state's future would be acceptable. India accused Pakistan of fomenting insurgency in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

Islamabad denies the charge but extends moral and diplomatic support to what it calls a legitimate campaign for self-rule.

India: Voting Begins in Final Phase of Elections in Kashmir

*BK3005042696 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0245 GMT 30 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, polling has begun in Udhampur and Srinagar Lok Sabha constituencies. Our Srinagar correspondent says more than 25 votes were cast at Barthana polling station in the first half hour. People were seen standing in queues at Parempura, Shivpura, and Rainabari areas of Srinagar city. Elaborate security arrangements have been made in the entire Srinagar constituency in view of intelligence reports that militants might make a last-ditch effort to scuttle the polling. Polling in the Udhampur constituency has started on a brisk note and long queues were seen at several polling stations. Our Jammu correspondent reports:

[Begin recording] In Jammu and Kashmir, polling has started in Udhampur and Srinagar constituencies in the third and final phase of polling in the state for Lok Sabha elections. Earlier reports from Katra, Vaishno Devi, Hiranagar, Kathua, Basoli, Bilaur, Ramnagar, Riasi, and Udhampur towns say that long queues of voters are present at several polling stations. Polling in hilly areas started on a slow pace. It normally picks up there around 1000. Security along the India-Pakistan international border in Kathua District has also been strengthened to foil any attempt by Pakistani troops or militants of trying to disturb the poll. Ajit Singh reporting from Jammu. [end recording]

This is the final round of the three-phase Lok Sabha election in the state. Counting of votes for the Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla, Ladakh, and Jammu consti-

ties will begin on Saturday. Counting for Udhampur will start on the 3d of next month.

India: Article Urges Continuing 'Nonalignment' Foreign Policy

*BK2805124896 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH
in English 27 May 96 p 10*

[Article by Rabindra Sen]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Since independence the Congress's domination of Indian politics at the Centre, apart from a few short breaks, has guaranteed continuity to the country's foreign policy. In view of the recent elections and the Congress's less than rosy future, the scope for changes in foreign policy needs to be probed.

Speaking about the impact of a change in government on foreign policy, the historian Arnold Toynbee had said the change would be akin to that which follows after halftime at a football match. Too simplistic, one may argue. According to some, Toynbee's view may also be applicable only to a two party system like that of the United Kingdom and not to India with its multiplicity of parties.

In foreign policy, the greatest unity of policy in the midst of great national diversity has been provided by, among other things, the practice of nonalignment. But, as times change, so do policies and ideas. New ideas replace old ones in order to be in tune with changing realities. The place of nonalignment in the new scheme of things needs to be analysed.

Nonalignment, the foundation of Indian foreign policy, enjoys the unqualified support of many. However it is not without its critics. Some feel nonalignment as a foreign policy strategy is worn out and should be discarded in view of changes in the international arena, especially with the end of the Cold War. Others feel nonalignment has stood the test of time and not lost its relevance in the post-Cold War era.

Nonalignment was long derided by the West and wrongly portrayed by it as fence sitting, if not just cynical opportunism. Of course, fence sitters are to be disparaged. But the independent minded are courted by all. India has wavered in its commitment to nonalignment largely when it felt required to do so because of the demands of specific situations. What is important to realise is that in being nonaligned India's ultimate objective is to retain its freedom of action.

The question is how much freedom of action non-aligned countries, many of them weak and small, really enjoy. The collective bargaining power of the non-aligned movement, despite the individual weaknesses

of its members is considerable. Being part of a global movement enhances their individual capabilities to a great extent.

There are other ways of establishing the relevance of nonalignment. Foreign policy is essentially a balancing act. Nonalignment provides heft and weight to a country's global influence, making it the best strategy to cope with the whirlwind changes taking place in international relations.

The real value of this movement lies in its flexibility. Its main strength is the consensus that exists among its members, notwithstanding the fact there will be, as in fact there are, differences on the manner of implementation of nonalignment. The Indian polity is characterised by diversity, but the hallmark of Indian foreign policy is its oneness. In this sense in spite of differences among political parties there does exist a national foreign policy that cuts across the political spectrum and party lines.

Nonalignment provides this oneness. As an ideology, nonalignment has become bound with India's vital interests. Giving it up would be tantamount to sacrificing India's basic interests.

Most importantly, those believing in the irrelevance of nonalignment in the post-Cold War period miss the basic truth that domination by great powers persists in the international system. The concept of nonalignment has not lost its 'raison d'être'. It still provides a common platform for the aspirations and interests of developing countries. This platform may not have enabled them to withstand the pressures mounted by the developed world to the desired extent. But it does not mean the movement should be wound up when there is no better alternative in sight. It is important to explore the relationship between power and nonalignment. A weak country is obviously susceptible to pressure from a stronger one. If nothing else, a weak country may wish to use its membership in the nonaligned movement as a psychological crutch, deriving confidence from being part of a worldwide movement.

For a larger country like India, nonalignment is of even greater utility. India may not be in the top bracket of the power hierarchy, but it is not insignificant either. India is a power to reckon with and its potential has been recognised by the major players on the world stage. It is clear nonalignment and power are not inversely related to each other. Rather, as India becomes more powerful it will feel a greater need to stay nonaligned.

Instead of looking askance at the nonaligned movement, India should move into the next century with the renewed determination to further strengthen the move-

ment. Giving up nonalignment would mean a loss to India's stature in the international scenario. Even other members of the movement would not like to dump nonalignment as useless — no member has resigned because the Cold War has ended.

The justification of the movement lies not in an emotional attachment to it but in the depth, direction and independence it has added to India's foreign policy.

India: Article Views 'Unprecedented American Trade Aggression'

*BK2705073796 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
25 May 96 p 8*

[Article by Shefali Misra: "The U.S. Way of Subverting the Trade Agenda"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For a developing world which has ill-digested the implications of the new world trade regime, the now well-aired differences in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) must bring cheer.

The Uruguay Round agreement (the GATT Final Act) is an overwhelming affair. Its full implementation will extend well into the first decade of the 21st century. No matter: the West has thought up an all new world trade agenda to be steamrollered through at breakneck speed. The idea is to give no pause, for reflection could be followed by resistance.

Just how brazen has been this attempt to prevent coherent third-world thinking was clear at the recent UNCTAD-IX (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) meeting in South Africa. When developing countries sought an advisory role for UNCTAD on exports, the US declared it would look out for its own exports and that others must not crawl to UNCTAD for guidance. In short, it was each to himself. The examples are easily multiplied, but this one makes the point.

Given this attitude of the West developing-country governments — divided among themselves and from their peoples on trade issues — can perhaps now say "Phew!" and make time to mop their brow.

For, as the run-up to the 27-country OECD's ministerial meeting now on in Paris has shown, there is no such thing as a single developed world position on world trade issues. There are bilateral differences, best seen in the troubled trade relationship between the US and Japan. There are sharp multilateral differences as well, as for instance between the European Union and the US on the approach to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and between other OECD countries and the US.

At the bottom of the mischief is —surprise— the US. In its highly offensive impatience to plough its own trade agenda through differing world sensibilities, the US has subverted rules and institutions and has trod alike on friendly and less-friendly toes.

What is this American agenda? A multilateral agreement on investment (MAI); the infamous social clause that would forge a link between labour and environmental standards and world trade. The latest in this link is corruption. The US, alone in all the world, has a law against its firms indulging in bribery on foreign shores. It would like all the world to fall in line and legislate likewise. Other OECD members unsurprisingly do not take too kindly to this. The US would also like, of course, to unilaterally punish those who stand up to its trade bullying but would resort to multilateralism when it is patently in its interest to do so. This too causes other rich-country brows to furrow.

In fact, though, there is much in the US agenda that is of common interest to much of the rich world. But there is much here that divides it. Above all, whatever the American approach to trade is called, it cannot be called a commitment to free trade. The OECD as a whole, though itself not above subverting free trade, is indignant at America's go-it-alone ways.

The differences, long simmering, are boiling over because of unprecedented American trade aggression even against partners in spheres far wider than trade. EU trade commissioner Leon Brittan wants an OECD resolution against unilateralism in trade and would have the US "stand up and be counted".

When the issue was undermining UNCTAD, the rich couldn't care less? When the issue is negotiating a multilateral agreement on investment (MAI) in the OECD rather than in the World Trade Organisation, that is fine too. The developing world, never mind that it attracts nearly half the world's new capital flows, must listen to rich-country wisdom on investment rules.

But what when all the rich world must refrain from investing in Cuba because the US will punish even non-American firms investing there? Ah, that's different. Or when China is unilaterally punished and Japan threatened with unilateral punishment unless it plays ball — what then? China must be coddled, because China can hand out contracts to Airbus Industrie against Boeing, and to Daimler Benz against the American Big Three. Besides, the US can turn on another rich trading partner as it has already done on Japan. Troubling questions, those, and they now divide the OECD.

Not that it is only the Rest of the OECD versus the US; it is the OECD versus the rest of the world too.

The OECD wants to undertake trade research for the WTO. This should please neither the WTO nor the Third World. So who is likeliest to win this potential tussle? Well, the US and other OECD countries are all in this one together.

India: Article Views Region's Nuclear Policy

BK2805114096 *Delhi THE PIONEER in English*
28 May 96 p 10

[Article by General Ashok Mehta]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The informal nuclear signal one received during a recent trip to Pakistan is that it will never give up its weapons capability and zealously safeguards what it regards as an independent nuclear deterrent. It matters little how the bomb design was acquired so long as it performs, regardless of the alleged violations by China, their nuclear ally, of NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] and MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime]. Pakistan, along with India and Israel, are some screwdriver turns away from the bomb.

Pentagon, CIA, State Department, US media and independent think tank findings reveal that Pakistan has 12 to 20 Hiroshima type bombs. Nuclear analysts are agreed that both India and Pakistan are de facto nuclear powers. The US freeze and cap lobby operating since 1990 in South Asia, has regularly cried wolf on the dangers of the nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan. The latest warning is from the noted South Asia expert, Mr Edward Buttak. He argues that, "Pakistan has escalated armed intrusion into Kashmir, while its President has boasted of her immediate readiness to fight India." This report was refuted by Pakistan. It is clear that the possession of a nuclear weapon has emboldened Pakistan to up the ante in Kashmir. The Western nuclear compass is stuck on the warning: "To stop the region's nuclear march, the way begins in Delhi." This has hardened the stand of the hawks in Pakistan. They have given a new twist to Prithvi, calling it "Pakistan-specific" — the short range of the missile proclaims its target is Pakistan.

An all-party round-table conference, "India's Nuclear Programme, Options For Pakistan", was held on March 29 at Rawalpindi. It decreed that Pakistan's nuclear programme was intrinsically linked to economic development and security of the country. The bomb lobby in Pakistan is big and is as hard as nails, notwithstanding recent assurance to Ms Robin Raphel, the US Assistant Secretary of State [for South Asian Affairs], that Pakistan would cooperate on CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty].

It is unpatriotic to forego the option. The man in the vanguard is former Army chief and leader of Awami Qadayat Party, General Aslam Beg, who maintains that the bomb is central to Pakistan's policy of "strategic defiance." At a Press conference on April 3 at his party office, Gen. Beg revealed that Pakistan never capped its nuclear programme. It only reduced uranium enrichment from 95 to 3.5 percent during 1989 in Ms Benazir Bhutto's regime, because they had enough enriched uranium. He repeated that Pakistan became a nuclear-capable power in 1987 when he was Vice Chief of Army Staff. Last week the father of the Pakistani bomb, Dr Abdul Qadir Khan, said, "Let me make it clear that at no stage was the programme stopped. I don't think any PM, President or even the Army chief would ever contemplate touching the programme which is so central to our security."

Pakistan's declared nuclear capability reportedly under military control, is the key to the impunity with which it has mounted a low cost proxy war in J&K [Jammu and Kashmir]. The nuclear issue is therefore an integral part of their Kashmir strategy and has deterred India from any transborder riposte. Pakistani leaders are convinced that the only way they can redress the imbalance of their inferiority in conventional weapons vis-a-vis India is through the nuclear shield. Under pressure from the IMF to reduce the defence budget, they realise they cannot keep up with India in the conventional weapons race. Like India, their official posture rests on ambiguity and denial.

The Moot Question

Over the question of control of the nuclear weapon programme and the existing nuclear weapon arsenal, most reports had suggested that the Army was in charge till the late 1980s. Latest assessments indicate that a National Command Authority (NCA) consisting of the President; COAS [Chief of Army Staff]; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and Director General, JCS, is in place. It is also widely believed that the nuclear programme is supported by Islamic countries besides China.

Pakistan's greatest nuclear asset is the Chinese connection dating back to 1965 when Z.A. Bhutto was Minister for Fuel and Power. Since then China has been the covert partner in shaping Pakistan's nuclear deterrent. In fact, unconfirmed Western intelligence reports suggest that China had actually detonated a Pakistani nuclear device in Xinjiang desert way back in 1983. Lately, China has supplied parts of a 300 mw nuclear power plant coming up near Islamabad besides the ongoing 40 mw nuclear reactor at Kahuta. The supply of ring magnets and M-11 missiles is open knowledge.

Pakistanis are fiercely proud of their ownership of the bomb. In their calculus it is the single greatest equaliser in the military balance weighted against them. It is at the core of the Quranic concept of striking terror in the heart of the enemy, the strategy spearheaded by its key motivator, General Aslam Beg. Exercise Zarb-e-Momin, General Beg's answer to General Sundarji's Brass Tracks, had integrated the nuclear scenario in the war games preceding the exercise. The Pakistani bomb meets three requirements: It gives it an Islamic colouring; it offsets India's conventional superiority; and, it maintains the status quo in Kashmir. Pakistan has the bomb with suitable fitments made in F-16 aircraft.

India, on the other hand, we are informed, is in a non-weaponised, non-tested and non deployed state of minimum nuclear deterrence and readiness as far as Pakistan is concerned. This ambiguity leaves service chiefs, who have to fight a conventional war, in a quandary. We have neither an NCP [no expansion as published] nor an acknowledged NCA [no expansion as published]—and of course, no bomb. Some nuclear theologians advocate that minimum deterrence precludes the first strike. Deterrence is assured from the unacceptable damage of the second strike in a reasonable time frame. Therefore, India, like China should renounce its first use.

The moot question is: How does minimum deterrence work through a set of assumptions in a situation of ambiguity and perhaps, bluff, especially when Pakistan has announced that its nuclear capability is integral to its Kashmir strategy? This degrades the credibility of an Indian second strike materialising in time. Nuclear deterrence is known to work in a situation of mutual invulnerability and a clarity of capabilities, intentions and readiness.

The Indo-Pakistan nuclear scenario, mired in emotions, estimates, assumptions and postures, makes its rationalisation difficult. The vintage Sundarji scenarios envisaging a Pakistani first strike have been noted in Pakistan. The first is in response to India enlarging the proxy war in J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] by launching a conventional counter-offensive elsewhere, as it did in 1965. Second, to support a Pakistani offensive to pre-empt an Indian counter-offensive in the first scenario.

The Pakistanis have not gone overt with the Beg nuclear doctrine though Prime Minister Bhutto, on a recent visit to Japan, did talk of the horrors of a nuclear exchange comparing Lahore and Delhi with Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ms Benazir Bhutto fears that Pakistan will get three minutes to react to an Indian nuclear attack. Therefore, Pakistan does not live comfortably in an ambiguous, unweaponised and undeployed nuclear stand-off with India.

India: Russia To Aid in Building 1st Nuclear Sub by 2004*BK2705110196 Delhi THE ASIAN AGE in English
25 May 96 p 1*

[Report by Mahesh Hebbar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, May 24 — India is set to build its first nuclear-powered submarine in a plan that has been accorded top naval priority and puts the country into a select six member club of the world's nuclear submarine powers.

The vessel, expected to be fitted with Cruise-type missiles, will be built indigenously with Russian assistance and commissioned by the year 2004. The project, heavily backed by senior Indian naval officers, is taking priority over every naval project, including the building of an indigenous aircraft carrier.

It will catapult India into the big league of the five nuclear submarine powers — the US, Russia, France, UK and China.

In an exclusive interview with THE ASIAN AGE, Capt. Richard Sharpe, who outlined the project this week in the 1996 version of Jane's Fighting Ships, said that a nuclear propulsion system had already been tested ashore by the Indian Navy. Fabrication work on the 6,000-tonne displacement hull will begin next year.

India's Navy chief Admiral Vijai Singh Shekhawat denied in Goa any plans to make a nuclear submarine. He said while the Navy would like to have one, there were no funds for the project. Admiral Shekhawat, briefing the press on the INS [Indian Navy Ship] Hansa, also denied that the US Navy had been allowed to use Goa and Kochi as ports of call. According to Capt. Sharpe, assistance from the Russian submarine development organisation Rubin is being sought to build the pressurised water reactor capable of generating 190 megawatts of power. Rubin is collaborating with India's Defence Research and Development Organisation which has already begun work on the pressurised water reactor.

The project is the follow-up of a previous venture with the Russians. In 1988 India leased a Russian nuclear submarine, SSGN Charlie II, commissioned in the Indian Navy as INS Chakra, to familiarise itself with the technology.

The submarine was returned to the Russian Navy after three years but it has provided the impetus for the development of an Indian nuclear submarine with Russian help.

"It puts the Indian Navy in a different league. You could call it the ace of spades in the pack of maritime capability," said Capt. Sharpe.

At present, India has twice the number of conventional submarines that Pakistan has. Of India's submarines, the majority have been built in Russia, two in Kiel (Germany) and only two indigenously at Bombay's Mazagaon docks. Experts believe that the coming nuclear submarine could also be built at Mazagaon, though Vishakapatnam's extensive ship building facilities make it a strong contender.

Pakistan, which has six conventional diesel submarines, plans to acquire 3 more from France to upgrade its fleet.

But Capt Sharpe believes that a nuclear submarine will give India a "colossal advantage" over its neighbour. "Facing a nuclear submarine is a nightmare; it has unlimited endurance and mobility and there's no place for a surface ship to hide," he said.

India: Navy Chief Denies Plan for Nuclear Submarines by 2004*BK2705110496 Delhi THE ASIAN AGE in English
25 May 96 p 4*

[Report by Pamela D'Mello]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] INS [Indian Navy Ship] Hansa (Goa), May 24 — The chief of naval staff, Admiral Vijay Singh Shekhawat, on Friday denied reports from London that India was poised to join the nuclear submarine club in the immediate future.

"We would like a nuclear submarine very much, but money is a big constraint," said Adm. Shekhawat, referring to a report in Jane's Fighting Ships that India had accorded top priority to its nuclear submarine project, work on which would start next year and the first nuclear submarines commissioned in 2004. The Navy chief was briefing the press after a three-day tour of inspection of this premier naval base.

During his visit, Adm. Shekhawat also toured the site of the Seabird naval base near Karwar in Uttar Kanara. This prestigious naval base has been on the drawing boards for the over 10 years, and got the final go-ahead from the government only last year. Many contracts for the Rs [rupees] 1,300-crore project will have to be renegotiated, the chief said, adding that work would start in September next year.

Adm. Shekhawat said air and water pollution in Indian harbours were taking a heavy toll on naval ships, leading to premature aging, "and it's sad to say the problem is severe in the harbours of Mumbai [Bombay] and Vishakhapatnam."

He was also concerned over the slow pace of "new orders" to replace old ships. "We would like to replace the (aircraft-carrier) Vikrant. But its replacement will

take 10 years." He added: "We want a government that moves things. It does not matter what shape or colour it has." The Navy chief also denied reports that the US Navy had been given permission to use the Goa and Cochin naval bases as ports.

India: Union Finance Minister Comments on Economic Issues

BK2505160896 Delhi THE ECONOMIC TIMES
in English 19 May 96 p 1

[Report on "exclusive" interview with Union Finance Minister Jaswant Singh by P.R. Ramesh; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Union Finance Minister Jaswant Singh has said that the role of the IMF and the World Bank in the Indian economy should be limited to aid.

In an exclusive interview to The Economic Times, the minister said the multilateral financial institutions should not be allowed to determine India's economic policies.

"I would have difficulty in accepting their role as supra-national entities that determine India's policies," he said even as he recognised their useful role. "Economic sovereignty is not simply an ideal or an aspiration. It is an absolute must," he said.

Mr Singh, who touched upon several issues, seemed to be aware of the slim chances his government had of surviving the May 31 deadline. Yet he continued to emphasise that the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] was committed to delivering on its manifesto promises.

He defended Prime Minister [PM] for expressing concern over the state of the economy, but clarified that Mr AB Vajpayee had not used the expression 'alarming' while doing so. "He was speaking in Hindi and what he actually said was that the state of the economy is a matter of concern — not alarming," he said. He also rejected the suggestion that by going public on the issue, the PM had sent out wrong signals.

He also did not agree that his predecessor, Dr Manmohan Singh, had refrained from painting a grim picture of the economic scenario after taking charge of the finance ministry. "He was doing that right from day one," he said.

The finance minister, however preferred to be discreet when quizzed about what he proposes to do to get to the bottom of the Reliance share switch episode. Mr Singh, who as an Opposition MP was instrumental in getting an inquiry ordered into the matter said, "Whatever steps

have to be taken will be taken. It shall be taken without fear, favour or prejudice. And justice will be done".

Questioned about the government's response to industry's demand for putting a cap on investments by MNCs [multinational corporations], he said serious consideration would be given to the views expressed by industry.

On how the government proposes to implement the BJP's poll promises, he specially referred to the BJP's proposal to set up a Disinvestment Commission to take care of disinvestment from the public sector. In its manifesto authored by Mr Singh himself the party had promised to utilise proceeds from PSU [public sector unit] disinvestment only on capital expenditure.

"Wait for the President's address to parliament on May 24," the finance minister said stressing his government's determination to take the economy along the route charted in the manifesto.

About the measures mentioned in the manifesto to contain the parallel economy, Mr Singh asserted, "Measures will be adopted for checking the amassing of unaccounted money. But it will be premature for me to go into the details as the matter falls in the realm of tax reforms which is part of the Budget." He added, "Discussing this in detail would be inconsistent with parliamentary propriety

The manifesto had also indicated the party's intention to introduce some immunity scheme to encourage capital creation through funds from the parallel economy while retaining the right of the government to tax the revenue that flows from such capital.

The finance minister was, however, more explicit in indicating the government's stand on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and India's obligation as a signatory to the World Trade Organisation.

"This government has inherited India's obligations as a signatory to the WTO. There remains matters of detail pending finalisation. We will ensure that India's viewpoint on IPR finds full expression in the negotiations. We will attempt to bridge the gap between our national interests and valid international concerns," he said.

When asked whether the government will seek to introduce changes in the Patents Bill pending in Parliament due to opposition from BJP and Left parties, Mr Singh said that he will make the necessary changes after accessing the WTO papers.

Mr Singh expressed satisfaction over revenue collection and defended his government's proposal to hike the income tax exemption ceiling to Rs [rupees] 60,000, discounting the view that this could increase the fiscal deficit.

Iran**Iran: Paper Views Clinton's Approach to Proposed Sanctions Bill**

LD2805194896 *Tehran IRAN NEWS in English*
25 May 19 96 p 1, 13

[Unattributed report: "Clinton Takes Conciliatory Approach on Iran Bill"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Dispatches) — US President Bill Clinton promised Thursday to try to address the concerns of European countries on a proposed measure to sanction foreign companies that do business with Iran.

A bill approved by the US Senate and currently before the House of Representatives calls for punishing companies with dealings with Iran and Libya.

"We will do everything we can to implement it in a way that is sensitive to the partnership we have with our friends and the honest disagreements that we have", Clinton said at a news conference with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

"This legislation... [punctuation as received] has some provisions with flexibility in it that enable the president to take into account the national interest of the country in implementing it", he said.

Germany, Iran's number one trading partner, has maintained ties with Iran along with other European countries and disagrees with the US view that Iran must be isolated to force changes in its policies.

The United States accuses Iran of sponsoring terrorism and of spreading weapons of mass destruction.

"We believe that there are a few countries in the world that all attempts to reason with have failed and that is why this legislation is making its way through Congress", Clinton said.

Clinton said he had discussed Iran during his 80-minute meeting with Kohl but he did not report any progress in persuading Germany to take a tougher line with Tehran.

"We are working on a number of things", Clinton said without elaborating. [passage omitted]

Iran: Commentary Views U.S., European Differences Over Sanctions

LD2705141696 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English* 1130 GMT 27 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The differences between Europe and the United States over the ways and the extent of economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic of

Iran have been on top of the international news in recent days. The visit by the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to the United States and his talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton has brought into the open the depth of these differences.

Iran, Libya, and Cuba are three countries that the United States is daydreaming of making them to succumb to U.S. dictated policies through economic sanctions. Negotiations between the European capitals and Washington in recent months, however, separated Iran from the triangle and made it the most prominent target of the United States' economic war against several independent states throughout the world.

It is certain that, following the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, the United States is hallucinating of undisputed hegemony over the earth. It is also certain that the Middle East is considered a strategic spot in the eyes of foreign policy shapers of the United States and, undoubtedly, the Persian Gulf is also considered by the United States to be the most vital place in the world in providing the energy needs of the industrial West.

Since 1979, when the Islamic revolution of Iran achieved victory, the Persian Gulf region has no longer been the United States' beloved island of stability, because, following a bloody revolution, an uncompromising government has come to power in this area — a political system which does not bend to U.S. intimidation, strives for independence, and is backed by a 60-million mass of people, who prefer their freedom and independence to their survival.

It is these undeniable realities which have, since 1979, defeated the White House political, military, and economic invasions against the Islamic Republic. Clinton's Secretary of State Warren Christopher, (?drowsed) in his usual dream of ruling the whole world, caused the popular resistance and [word indistinct] government system as terrorist, (?on 6 May), claiming that European policies would not change Iran's behavior and that Iran should come under economic pressure, so that talks with it would have positive results [sentence as heard].

Of course, in the United States' political dictionary, positive means to accept dominance by the United States and forget about one's freedom and independence.

Despite general coordination between other Western countries and the United States, Europe has come to realize that Islamic Iran can never be brought to its knees. According to the Voice of America, Ian Taylor, a senior British official, talks of retaliatory actions by Europe against imposed American policies on the international community. The voicing of opposition to U.S. policies on this issue by London, the most

strategic ally during the eighties and nineties, is a clear indication that Europe has definitely understood something which the United States does not have enough intelligence to find out. Washington speaks of the necessity of coordination and cooperation in the greater Western community to stand up to what the White House calls outlaw governments. Recent positions by the German chancellor and senior officials of the British Government last week are signs of Europe's understanding of an absolute reality. Paris, London, and Bonn have come to know that, while Washington talks of consultations and solidarity with Europe, it is holding the olive branch on the bare blade of a sword.

Iran: Radio Denounces U.S. Sanctions Against Iran
LD2505183096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On Friday, 24 May, the Central News Bureau in Bonn reported [that] German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, during his two day visit to the United States, has once again safeguarded the policy of maintaining ties with Tehran. The Central News Bureau meanwhile reports that the German chancellor has expressed concern over the ratification of an anti-Iranian bill by the U.S. Congress to impose economic sanctions against Iran.

It is to be noted [that] prior to Helmut Kohl's visit to America, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, during a visit to Washington early this May, criticizing U.S. policies, warned that country: In case Washington insists on using specific economic policies as political means, the European Union will retaliate in turn. Bonn's criticism of Washington's policy of imposing economic sanctions on Iran comes at a time when this very issue has been dominating EU political and economic circles' talks during the past few days. The issue was raised during [the] recent gathering of 27 OECD member states in Paris. Many industrial countries, such as France, Canada, Germany, and Japan, censured U.S. statesmen for disregarding regulations of free world trade and pressuring European countries to follow suit. EU countries have, on various occasions, warned America over possible consequences of taking steps for an encounter to rules and regulations of international trade, stipulating that Washington is not in the least entitled to harm other countries' economic interests for the sake of its own unilateral aims.

At any rate, ever-growing oppositions voiced against Washington's domineering policies on the international arena are taking on new dimensions. Elsewhere, some

news reports indicate [that] the U.S. statesmen have called on the country's representatives of the Congress to take into account the consequences such could have on America's trade partners. To the same end, Western political and press circles speak of emerging domestic opposition at the U.S. Congress over the ratification of an economic embargo bill.

At any rate, political analysts hold [that the] growing objection to America's policies is in fact a warning to U.S. officials concerning the fact that the age of imposing one's viewpoints has come to an end and that goes for everyone in every country, Washington included. Such measures will further isolate America and bring the real nature of its illegitimate policies to light, then have negative repercussions on the economic growth of countries becoming the target of U.S. sanctions.

Iran: Paper Views PLO, Israel 'Invitation' to Opposition Groups

LD2705181496 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 22 May 96 p 16

[Unattributed report: "The PLO and the Hypocrites Unite"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The weekly AL-MAJD, published in Jordan, in its issue on 20 May revealed that in order to harm the Islamic Republic of Iran, Yasir 'Arafat and Shim'on Peres, the prime minister of the Zionist regime, have invited Iran's opponents, including the hypocrites [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization], to Gaza. Quoting reliable sources in 'Arafat's government, the weekly announced that 'Arafat had called on Iran's opponents to open offices in Gaza.

Quoting the source, AL-MAJD writes: 'Arafat's government and Israel will give the hypocrites financial and military support. AL-MAJD adds: In view of the fact that 'Arafat and Israel have difficulties in establishing constant contacts and links with Iran's opposition groups, they have therefore asked them to open offices in Gaza.

The invitation extended to the hypocrites to open their central offices, or missions, in Gaza will naturally be considered as a positive point for the group, because the terrorist hypocrite organization has been trying for some time to leave Iraq and to move elsewhere. None of the Western countries has so far expressed readiness to accept them. [passage omitted]

For some time now, Iraq has been unable to continue to play host to the hypocrites because of its increasing economic and political problems. The group's members are under pressure from the country's regime to leave Iraq. On the other hand no European country agreed to

give refuge to the hypocrite grouplet because of the group's terrorist nature. [passage omitted]

Undoubtedly the transfer of the hypocrites to Gaza, the headquarters of the PLO government, can unite the two terrorist and Zionist organizations and will help them to use each other's forces and resources.

It is still not very clear whether 'Arafat's intention is increased hostility and poisonous political propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran or if he wants to use the remaining forces of the hypocrites to fight against Palestine's Islamic groups. However, the weekly AL-MAJD wrote that, by this action, 'Arafat could prove to the United States that he could also play a role in putting pressure on Iran. AL-MAJD adds: 'Arafat is trying hard to please America. [passage omitted]

We should, however, consider these kinds of measures in line with the organized Zionist activities against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Recently the daily YEDI'OT AHARONOT, published in Tel Aviv, said in an article that it had been commissioned by the Israeli espionage organization to publish propaganda material against Iran during the Zionist regime's elections, including disseminating false propaganda against Iran. Without doubt such political and propaganda efforts and terrorist activity of this kind represents the weakness and desperation of the Zionist circles in confronting the people of Iran.

Iran: Commentary Raises Questions Over Iraq-UN Oil Deal

LD2805184196 *Tehran IRAN NEWS in English*
22 May 96 p 2

[Commentary: "Oil-for-Food Deal by Iraq-UN Raises Certain Questions"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed by the United Nations and the Iraqi regime provides for Iraq to export 2bn dollars worth of oil — or 700,000 barrels per day (bpd) over a six month period. It is renewable if UN Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali confirms that Baghdad implemented it properly.

Observers in Iran view the MoU with the following comments: A. The oil embargo is lifted for the first time in almost six years allowing the purchase of much needed food and medicine for the Iraqis. During its full enforcement, the sanction hit the Iraqi people and not the Iraqi regime.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported last December that more than half a million Iraqi children may have died as a direct result of the sanctions.

The international community wanted to punish the Saddam regime through sanctions. But instead, the children, women and others from the low income classes of Iraqi society were punished for the crimes committed by Saddam Husayn. B. According to the MoU, 30 per cent of the Iraqi oil income will be given to Kuwait as war compensation. Observers here believe that this amount is too small for oil-rich Kuwait. The priority must be given to the dire needs of the people of Iraq.

On the reparation issue, observers here ask the world body whether the Iraqi regime committed attacks only against Kuwait during the last two decades. The newly-born Islamic Republic was the first victim of Iraqi aggression. Butrus-Ghali's predecessor, Javier Perez de Cuellar, towards the end of his tenure, publicly confirmed that the Iraqi regime was the initiator of the 1980-88 war.

So, if war reparation is to be paid by the Iraqi regime, then Iran should be the first to receive it. C. The MoU also makes a provision for the payment of 150m dollars every six months to the Kurdish community in Northern Iraq. True, the Iraqi regime has committed atrocious crimes against its own Kurdish community and the bitter memory of the transgression against the civilians of Halabjah is still fresh.

But what about Iraq's national sovereignty? The question of sovereignty is very sensitive and should be viewed by the big powers very seriously. The international society should define sovereignty explicitly and tell the world whether or not the payment of 150m dollars to the Kurdish community, without the consent of the regime in Baghdad is a violation of Iraq's national sovereignty. D. With 100,000 bpd of Iraqi oil entering the international market, the present price trends could be disturbed. OPEC's oil ministers will meet soon to determine the future course of the organization.

We expect Saudi Arabia to stick to its pre-war quota of 5.5m bpd. Riyadh increased its quota to 8m at the end of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1991. Other OPEC members such as Venezuela and Qatar should also adhere to their OPEC quotas.

Iran: Official on Delay in Exchange of Iran-Iraq POW Lists

LD2605113896 *Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian* 0930 GMT 26 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The head of the committee in charge of the affairs of Iranian POW's and missing in action [MIA] announced: If Iraq is prepared to hold the fifth negotiating session between Iranian and Iraqi delegations, the list of the POW's and MIA's belonging

to both countries will be exchanged between Tehran and Baghdad.

Brig 'Abdallah Najafi, today, on the eve of 11th Moharram [29 May], which is POW and MIA Day, announced this news saying that in the course of last year [21 March 95-19 March 96], after four intensive sessions of talks between the Iranian and Iraqi delegations, the two sides agreed to exchange the names of the existing POW's in the two countries. But this has not yet taken place and has been postponed, each time, due to the Iraqi delegation's inability to make decisions.

The head of the legal, security, and intelligence bureau of the armed forces general command added: The Iraqi negotiating team does not have full authority to decide on the release of the POW's, and this has delayed the actual exchange of the names of the POW's despite the understanding reached between the two countries on this matter.

Brig Najafi stressed that if Iraq was prepared, the list of the names of the POW's could begin to be exchanged and studied in both countries for the purposes of identifying their respective POW's. [passage omitted]

Iran: Construction of New Dam on Euphrates in Turkey Viewed

NC2805161496 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish* 1630 GMT 27 May 96

[Unattributed commentary: "Turkey's Fifth Dam on the Euphrates"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Demirel laid the foundations for the fifth large dam on the Euphrates River on 25 May. The installations will be constructed in Karkamis, which is close to Syria's border. Speaking at the ceremony that was held on the occasion, Demirel pointed to the importance of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers for Turkey's technological and economic development and noted: The Euphrates originates in Turkey. So, it is Turkey's right to use its waters in the best possible way.

The observers believe that the construction of dams on the Tigris and Euphrates will reduce the transnational waters which flow into Syria and Iraq. That may create shortage of water in the two countries in the future. The Turkish Government has also approved a project for supplying water to Israel from the Manavgat River. Considering that, the projects it has drawn up to reduce the water flow to Syria and Iraq may provoke hostilities in the region.

The Middle East countries are faced with the problem of a water shortage. Their water resources are far less than the acceptable standards in the world. That state of

affairs has prompted them to adopt a sensitive approach on the construction of dams on the rivers which meet most of their needs. Many of the economic experts have said that the problem of water supply will be one of the most important issues in the new century. In fact, they believe that water will be more valuable than oil.

The Turkish Government constructed the first dam on the Euphrates in 1966. It constructed the Ataturk, Karakaya, and Birecik Dams on the same river from 1978 to 1993. Naturally, the installations have reduced the amount of water Syria and Iraq use for drinking and generating power. They also reduced the amount the two countries use in their agricultural fields.

However, Turkish newspapers have tried to divert the people's attention by claiming that Syria and Iraq have rich water resources.

Obviously, the Tigris and Euphrates may be used as a means of pressure against several countries in the future, particularly Syria and Iraq. Considering that the two rivers are of vital importance for Syria and Iraq, the improvement of Ankara's relations with Damascus and Baghdad will be difficult before the problem of sharing of their waters is resolved. Meanwhile, the political observers are convinced that Israel is trying to worsen the problem in order to be able to influence relations between Turkey and Syria. In fact, an influential newspaper in Britain said last week that Israel does not want to withdraw from the Golan Heights because of its need for the area's water resources. The newspaper said that Syria also needs water and stressed that Ankara has realized the importance of its resources in the region. It noted that that is why Ankara has decided to increase its dams on the Euphrates.

Considering the importance of the water resources in the region, the Western arms dealers and imperialists have already moved to sell arms to the possible sides of a war that may break out over water resources.

Iran: Commentary Assesses EU-Syria Relations

LD2605151096 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian* 1003 GMT 26 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday an EU delegation headed by the European Commission Vice President Manuel Marin arrived in Syria and met and conferred with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. The two sides discussed the political aspects of bilateral cooperation and the preliminary preparations for the second meeting of the Syrian-EU cooperation council, which is to be convened on 10 June.

Earlier, several European delegations led by EU rotating presidents had also visited Syria, including one led by Italian foreign minister Susanna Agnelli a month ago and another led by Felipe Gonzalez, the Spanish premier and the rotating EU president, as well as a delegation headed by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe. On the other hand, senior Syrian officials also undertook several diplomatic visits to European countries aimed at increasing Europe's political role in the Middle East negotiations as well as strengthening bilateral ties in various dimensions. Those include periodic visits by Faruq al-Shar' to five European countries last Mordad [July-August].

Political experts believe that the basis for recent cooperation between the EU and Syria, which was forged three years ago, is founded on mutual needs. The factor which more than anything else has played a role in paving the way for the establishment and extension of those bilateral ties is their common apprehension concerning the tangible dangers in the so-called American peace plan for the Middle East. That plan constitutes three stages: start of bilateral political negotiations between Tel Aviv and each and every one of the Arab states, multilateral economic talks at regional level and, ultimately, mobilizing the region's resources to fight against Islamism. In the course of its implementation, the plan, at first targets Arab states by creating division among them. But, bearing in mind that America's main objective in setting up the talks process is to create a new system in the region with an economic characteristic of revolving around the Zionist regime, the EU considers this part of the compromise process as a program to reduce the traditional European role in the region. That is why it is trying to strengthen its relations with the Middle East countries and the Mediterranean region, including Lebanon and Syria within existing establishments and if necessary by convening multilateral economic conferences.

On that basis, the EU began two years ago to put substantial economic and financial aid at Syria's disposal after lifting its arms ban against Syria. Of course, Syria's diplomatic efforts also have been effective in this. By trying to transform the European economic power into a political one, Damascus is endeavoring to use it as its international support in its negotiations with the Zionist regime. Thus, by filling the vacuum left by the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, moderate America's supportive stance which is in favor of the Zionist regime and against Syria. Pursuing that policy by Syria has brought it positive results and it seems that with the increased differences between America and Europe over the current trends in the Middle East, as well as the resumption of ties between Damascus and Moscow

fresh opportunities have been put at the disposal of Syria which it can utilize to prevent the Zionist regime's expansionism and hegemony.

Iran: Daily Condemns Killing of French Monks

*LD2605110896 Tehran IRNA in English
0827 GMT 26 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 26, IRNA — An English-language daily Sunday strongly condemned the murder of seven French Trappist monks by militants of the Algerian Armed Group (GIA), saying that this is a clear instance of terrorism and that free and fair elections should be held in Algeria to discourage the activities of criminal groups.

"The act without any doubt is barbaric and carried out by criminals who have no respect for human life," the TEHRAN TIMES wrote, stressing that it violated Islamic values which do not permit attacks on the lives of innocent people.

While calling on the Algerian Government and on Algerian Muslims to prevent the repetition of such crimes, at the same time, it advised the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to take all precautionary measures to prevent being infiltrated by such groups, adding that the enemies of Islam are out to discredit the cause of the Algerian people.

The editorial continued by saying the Algiers regime's scrapping of democratic elections in January 1992 denied the fundamental rights of the democratically elected representatives of the people.

An unhealthy atmosphere encourages criminal groups to fish in troubled waters, it stated, concluding that the regime in Algiers and its patrons must allow the holding of fair and free elections as this leaves no room for criminal groups to operate in Algeria.

Iran: Commentary Notes Move Toward Peace in Afghanistan

*LD2605102096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
0350 GMT 26 May 96*

[Unattributed commentary: "Afghanistan is on the Road to Peace Regardless of Taleban"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The agreement signed last Friday morning by Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Golboddin Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb-e Eslami, has received diverse reaction in the past two days. The outcome of these reactions indicates the strengthening of the peace process in Afghanistan. The main members of the Coordination Council, which up to a while ago was

considered the most important anti-government alliance in Afghanistan, have cautiously but explicitly assessed the Rabbani-Hekmatyar agreement as a fitting foundation for setting up a coalition government on the basis of the demands of the majority of the Afghan people.

Some smaller groups, by not commenting, have avoided obstructionism. Only the wayward Taleban group has become isolated in its opposition to the peace agreement. That is why most experts in Afghan affairs believe that despite repeated shelling of Kabul and the massacre of a number of civilians in the past 24 hours, the dominant trend in Afghanistan is that of peace. Sporadic clashes and rocket fire are in fact reactions of a group that still believes war to be the best means of attaining power. These experts, referring to Afghan developments in the past few months and the factors that led to the signing of the peace accord by Rabbani and Hekmatyar, add: The main changes that came about in the balance of power of the groups and parties will not allow any group, for a long time to come, to bring about significant changes in the power relationships by military means. Therefore, the attacks by the Taleban group should not be construed as a serious threat to the current trend of events in Afghanistan since the pragmatism of the main Afghan groups and parties at this juncture has preferred the negotiation method to the war method. There is the hope that the negotiation method overcomes the war method by utilizing the support of the Afghan people and the goodwill of that country's neighbors.

Iran: IRAN NEWS Hails Rabbani-Hekmatyar Accord, Slams Taleban

LD2605084196 Tehran IRNA in English
0812 GMT 26 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 26, IRNA — An English daily Sunday editorialized on the signing of a six-point accord Friday between two Afghan rival groups, saying this new alliance could prove to be the most important determining factor in shaping the country's future.

Commenting on the presence of five major military powers in Afghanistan, 'IRAN NEWS' wrote that the Taliban remains the only powerful Afghan group capable or willing to prolong the civil war by creating problems for the newly created Rabbani-Hekmatyar alliance.

The Taliban responded to the newborn alliance by rocketing Kabul Friday, killing more than 30 people, it said, adding that the Taliban's belligerence continues while their distasteful behavior towards their own people, particularly towards women, has made them extremely unpopular all over Afghanistan.

"Pakistan exercises great influence over the Taliban, and this new and positive development in Afghanistan increases neighboring Pakistan's responsibility towards the resolution of the Afghan crisis."

While the two main opposing groups in the Afghan conflict have finally entered a coalition aimed at ending the war, the daily concluded by stressing, "any military-economic assistance from Islamabad to the war-mongering Taliban, with their Middle Ages mentality, is unacceptable and unjustifiable."

Iran: Radio, Television Cooperation Discussed With Vatican

LD2505205596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
1930 GMT 25 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a meeting in Tehran on Saturday night between the head of the Vatican's international radio and Mr. ['Ali] Larijani, the two sides discussed the grounds for radio and television cooperation between the two countries, and the need for expanding this cooperation was stressed.

According to the Central News Unit, at the meeting, which was also attended by a number of deputies and managing directors from the Voice and Vision Organization, the head of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran explained his organization's range of resources and capabilities, and announced the organization's complete willingness to cooperate with the Vatican in technical fields and in radio and television programming.

Mr. Larijani also spoke of the importance of respecting human morality and dignity in all radio and television programs in order to preserve the foundations of the family, and noted: Today, those sections of the Western mass media, which are under the control of capitalism and Zionism, have a bad influence on human societies. He added: The Vatican, as an influential spiritual force in the West, must confront the dangers that threaten societies because of these types of media.

Mr. [Pasquale] Borgomeo, the head of the Vatican's international radio, for his part said that the Pope, the leader of the world's Catholics, is against immorality just like the Islamic Republic of Iran and is fighting the decline in commitments and morality in the West, and he declared the Vatican's full willingness to expand radio and television cooperation with the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran: ABRAR on Impact of Railroad on World Trade

NC2705142396 Tehran ABRAR in Persian
19 May 96 p 4

[Economic commentary by Dr. Habib Chini: "Iran—Confluence of East and West"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Until a few days ago, when we mentioned Iran's sensitive position in the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Transcaucasian countries, we usually had its natural and historical situation in mind. Since yesterday however, not only Iran's position and pivotal role in the region but also its quintessential position with regard to international links has assumed a new significance.

In his speech at the inauguration ceremony for the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad, Suleyman Demirel, president of our neighbor Turkey, made a remarkable statement: The Silk Route was not a mere highway that helped convey products; it made it possible for peoples of various continents to embrace one another. Demirel added that even if the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad were to play only the role of a trade link, it would be a momentous project.

The railroad's most basic and important role, however, is to foster intercontinental contacts. Thanks to the efforts of Iran and Turkmenistan, the eastern ports of the PRC have now been linked to Rotterdam in the Netherlands; and, in practice, two large oceans have been linked. This major link has in fact become possible due to the 300 km of railroad built on the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan route.

The fact is that the construction of this much shorter but difficult route materialized due to far-reaching and fundamental political developments for which the Islamic Revolution was one of the catalysts; the other was the collapse of the communist regime in the former Soviet Union. [passage omitted]

Iran could previously reach the PRC markets only by sea, and the landlocked countries under Soviet domination were unable to take independent steps to boost their own trade and were forced to conform to Moscow's decisions. Now all these countries, including the Transcaucasian countries, have found a new conduit, which has infused fresh life into their economies.

However, the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan route is of strategic importance not only to the aforementioned countries. Its importance will have an impact on world trade. For example, the 12 member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] will benefit from this route. India and Pakistan will not be able to find a bet-

ter alternative for accessing the Central Asian markets. Afghanistan, a landlocked country, can become more active in the arena of international trade.

Japan and the newly industrialized countries of southeast Asia have gained a reliable and inexpensive route for entry into the markets of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. All the European countries, too, have acquired new avenues for world trade. By using this route, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the African countries have more extensive possibilities than before to access the potential, wealthy markets of Central Asia and to European and Far Eastern countries.

Thus, in conformity with today's technology and needs, a shorter route and firm determination has resulted in reviving the Silk Route's distinctive position.

What is interesting is that along with this railroad, the ECO air route has also been inaugurated; the ECO shipping line, too, is being completed. Expansion of the Iranian ports in the north and south, under way since the eight years of the imposed [Iran-Iraq] war, continues; damaged ports have been repaired and are in the process of being revived and renovated. The free trade and industrial zones will also serve to provide firm support to the Silk Route.

Now attention must be paid to peripheral issues, such as the construction of warehouse, new cold storage sections, piers and loading docks, hotels and rest houses, well-equipped workshops, and lastly, the further expansion of existing rail routes, and providing a multi-track railway system on the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan route itself, which should be planned on the basis of economic feasibility studies.

Although until yesterday the need for joint investment to set up export-oriented industries between Iran and the Central Asian and Transcaucasian countries had been neglected, the countries whose foreign trade will benefit from Iran's nationwide railroad network should bear in mind that to content itself with merely charging for the transit and transport of goods would not be an ideal situation for Iran. We rightfully expect to be able to collaborate in setting up joint industries, and to convey our jointly-manufactured products to the world markets so that we can participate in, and share in, increasing the value-added returns and the region's imports volume. The benefits would then accrue to both sides.

Iran: Ground Forces Commander Comments on 'Velayat' Maneuvers

LD2505191096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The commander of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has, in a message, thanked the esteemed leader and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, for visiting the zone where the great Velayat maneuvers were held.

Part of this message which was submitted to the esteemed commander in chief of the Armed Forces, states: The Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran will follow their illustrious leader to their last breath and might; the Armed Forces are enjoying the best combat and defense positions under the wise leadership of the velayat-e faqih [supreme jurisconsult].

Brigadier General [Ahmad] Dadbin has emphasized in his message that the great Velayat maneuvers were a manifestation of the Armed Forces' total obedience to the leader of the Muslim nation and commander in chief of the armed forces. Everyone saw how the brave soldiers, who made the enemy tremble with their cries and the sound of their weapons in the arenas of combat, humbly followed their leader and performed their prayers of gratitude.

Iran: Commentary Assesses 'Velayat' Military Maneuvers

LD2505183996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's Army's extensive maneuvers, called Velayat, ended on Friday, 24 May, with 100 percent success and without any casualties at all. In those maneuvers, which were the biggest ever to be carried out in the Middle East, more than 200,000 troops, 150 fighter aircraft and helicopter gunships, hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles and a large number of guns and other military equipment were used.

The great Velayat maneuvers were held in an area as large as 5,400 square km between Tehran and Qom and all missions assigned for its different units were completely and successfully fulfilled; the troops, being stationed on the imaginary international borders on time.

According to experts, the large-scale maneuvers by the Islamic Republic Army can be evaluated from several different aspects. From the military point of view, one of the major reasons for holding those maneuvers was to transfer the experiences of the eight-year Iraqi-

imposed war against the Islamic Republic to the units participating in the training exercises. On this point military experts graded the maneuvers to be highly successful.

Another aspect of the maneuvers was the use of new equipment and those which has been rebuilt since the end of the eight-year war. In its war with Iraq, Iran learned a big lesson, namely, that international organizations are not serious in ending all military clashes and that every country should stand upon its own feet in defending itself. So what Iran is practicing now is the result of such a learning.

In fact Iran's efforts to reach self-sufficiency in military gear and equipment is another result of that lesson. The fruit of such drive towards self-sufficiency, which have been achieved by domestic specialists, were extensively demonstrated in the big maneuvers of Velayat.

The political message of those maneuvers are also thought to be of much significance. The maneuvers have had wide-scale coverage in the regional and international press. These press networks have always been trying to portray all defensive and peace-making moves by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the contrary through their propaganda tactics and spread of fabricated stories while the only message of the vast Velayat maneuvers to the world was to underscore the Islamic Republic military forces' capability of organization and readiness and its ability to answer decisively any kind of aggression and invasion against the territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The supreme leader of the Islamic revolution and commander-in-chief of the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces, Ayatollah Khamene'i, pointed out this fact at the beginning of the maneuvers, saying: The Iranian armed forces threatened no state or nation, neither in the region nor in the world. Nevertheless, any country which might think of invading Iran, its nation or its holy Islamic government should consider itself to be threatened by the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran: Daily Stresses Crucial Role of Armed Forces

LD2605113096 Tehran IRNA in English 0959 GMT 26 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 26, IRNA — The English daily KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL Sunday commented on crucial role of the Armed Forces noting that the recent large-scale maneuvers of the ground forces has left far-reaching effects on both regional and international circles.

As to great responsibility of the Armed Forces, the editorial stressed that when Iran had fallen victim to Saddam Husayn's political ambitions in 1980, no reaction was observed in the region and Iran was isolated in its struggle to drive out the Iraqi forces from the occupied territories.

Underlining the need to establish a national army in order to serve as a strong instrument to maintain and guard political sovereignty and keep national independence intact, it wrote that such army does not fully exist in the present political establishment of our neighboring countries.

"These armies, unfortunately, are employed to suppress the upheaval of domestic opposition movements who are seeking either to have a say in the political setup or enjoy a set of basic rights within the already recognized and ratified laws," added the paper.

The editorial added that the Zionist-controlled media made every efforts to portray a hostile perspective of the military exercise of the Islamic Armed Forces. "The actual motives behind this vicious propaganda is well-known given the deep-seated and lasting hostility of the Zionists towards this Islamic nation."

Referring to the new role assumed by the Armed Forces, the editorial stressed that the role should be strengthened further and consolidated so that the forces could emerge as a strong arm in the massive reconstruction period along with other civil and military forces.

Iran: Ayatollah Khamene'i Leads 'Ashura Mourning Ceremonies

*LD2805100696 Tehran IRNA in English
0631 GMT 28 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 28 (IRNA) — Mourning ceremonies were held on the occasion of "'Ashura'" in the presence of the leader of Islamic revolution Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i here on Monday.

'Ashura (literally the tenth, and tenth of the lunar Hejira month of Muharram al-Haram) marks the anniversary of the historical battle in Karbala between the third imam of the Prophet Mohammad's (sawa) [God's peace be upon him] infallible household Hazrat Hoseyn ibn 'Ali (pbuh) [peace be upon him] and 72 of his followers on the one hand and a very large army of his adversary Ibn-Ziyad sent at the instance of Yezid Ibn Muaviah, who considered himself de jure caliphate of the Muslim society of his time, in Karbala in the year 61 a.h. (680 a.d.).

At the ceremonies, held in the presence of Ayatollah Khamene'i, a large number of mourners had taken part,

where preachers and lecturers dwelt on the tragedies occurred on such a day. The mourners also beat their chests and chanted songs in agony.

Imam Hoseyn (pbuh), the son of Imam 'Ali (pbuh) and the grandson of the prophet (sawa) through his mother the Lady Fatima (pbuh) could bear it no longer and in a heroic uprising at Karbala on the day courted martyrdom along with his small band of followers and male members of the prophet's (sawa) clan the Bani Hashim.

Iran: Group Meets in Advance of New Majles Term

*LD2805193696 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English
23 May 19 96 p 1, 13*

[Commentary: "G-6 Members are to Meet Today"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — A considerably crucial meeting will be held today [23 May] at Jamaran and to be attended by members of the Servants of Construction or G-6, a reliable source said yesterday.

The source talking to 'Iran News' said, "They are meeting on the eve of the inauguration of the fifth term of the Majles to discuss and shape the future course of the G-6 in the legislative body".

"All those who fought Majles elections on G-6 list and also those for whom the group extended support have been invited to attend today's meeting in Jamaran," he said.

North Tehran's Jamaran was the residence of the leader of the deprived, the late Imam Khomeyni.

The selection of a name for the post of speaker is high on the agenda to today's meeting. Earlier two names used to be mentioned by the G-6 for the post of Majles speaker including Deputy Speaker of the Fourth Term of the Majles Hasan Rowhani and former Interior Minister Abdollah Nuri, elected from the Tehran constituency in March-April elections.

Informed sources say that Rowhani withdrew from the fight for the top post of the Majles. He was a common candidate on the list of G-6 as well as Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyat-e-Mobarez (JRM) [Militant Clergy Association].

Now it is believed that Abdollah Nuri will be the sole candidate of the G-6 for the post of speaker. It is also believed that the left-wing will also support the G-6 in its fight for the election of speaker.

The left-wing fought the elections in the name of "Those who follow Imam's line (thinking)".

Others, however, believe that Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri will retain his post in the next parliament.

"The G-6 knows it does not have majority in the fractured Majles and it will be a great victory for the group if it gets 100 votes in the speaker's election", a Majles analyst commented.

After the inauguration of the Majles an Interim Presiding Board will be elected which review and finalize the credentials of all the Majles deputies.

There are differences of opinion on the make-up of the Majles. It is believed that G-6 has some 110 lawmakers and 40 are supporters.

The JRM had a meeting a few days ago which was attended by Nateq- Nuri and Secretary-General Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani [name as published]. The JRM invited 160 elected members of the Majles, but 10 to 12 did not show up.

"Still it's not clear as far as Majles make-up is concerned", an informed source told 'Iran News'.

Iran: Majles Presents Report on Tehran Municipality Misconduct

LD2805192496 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English
23 May 96 p3

[Unattributed report: "Majles Investigates the Municipality"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — The Majles Investigative Committee has finished its report on the alleged misconducts of the Mayor's Office.

In its final report, the committee said the Municipality had committed several illegal acts. It added that even if those acts were committed with the best of intentions they still constituted grave and unforgivable crimes by an organization which is supposed to help uphold the law.

The report mentioned several administrative and financial wrongdoings in the Municipality Office, including expensive foreign trips, constructing commercial buildings [that] were prohibited because of zoning ordinances or due to national security considerations, hiring personnel on contract basis without proper screening of their qualifications.

The committee also cited the security offices of the Municipality, the Interior Ministry, and the Information [Intelligence] Ministry for their refusal to cooperate with the Majles Investigative Committee, and requested that legal action be taken against them.

Iran: Rafsanjani Endorses Daily Hit by Reported Paper Shortage

LD2805183096 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian
23 May 96 p 1

[Unattributed editorial: "The Importance of the Press"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani met the editor-in-chief and the managing-director of the daily AKHBAR on 22 May and showed kindness to this young member of the country's press family during the most difficult moments in its professional life. The president approved the role played by AKHBAR in disseminating information, especially its coverage of news during the elections for the Islamic Majles.

The meeting is very important for AKHBAR and the country's press community, and it is testimony that the country's senior officials appreciate the role played by the press. Although AKHBAR was on the brink of being closed down, it did not ignore its cultural responsibility. It continued to follow its path and even preferred to be published on one page [instead of being closed down].

AKHBAR was subjected to some unfair criticism by those people who do not understand the meaning of the press and who choose the profession of journalism to achieve their goals. When those people were disappointed, they became angry and resorted to making allegations against us — allegations ranging from political performance to everything else. Why are we steering the sphere of culture to move it towards a battleground for factional attacks? [passage omitted]

AKHBAR only gives priority to gaining the satisfaction of the noble people of Iran. What purpose will the absence of AKHBAR serve for a number of people who are praying for it? If we believe in the fact that the strangers [na mahraman] are expending huge amounts of capital in order to plunder the culture of this ancient and Muslim nation, then we should support every published page and treat them as blood for the heart of the country's culture.

AKHBAR does not do anything except fulfil its mission and does not have any aim but to serve the people. At the meeting with AKHBAR, the president confirmed the validity of the views and the path that this young member of the press family follows. It is sufficient for AKHBAR that its services have been acknowledged by the people and the president alike.

[Tehran IRAN NEWS in English on 23 May in an unattributed page two report on the above meeting states:

["AKHBAR managing director presented a comprehensive report on the daily's birth and life over the past eleven months and enumerated various problems faced by the daily. As the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance did not allocate AKHBAR's paper share, the daily says it had to purchase 45 tonnes of paper in trust against payment of a cheque. The said paper was offered to the AKHBAR at a price that was higher than open market rates."]

Iran: Minister—Islamic Laws Should Be Observed in University

LD2805182596 *Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English*
23 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed article: "Golpayegani: Universities Should Enforce Guidelines of Leader on Observing Islamic Laws"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] TEHRAN — The Minister of Culture and Higher Education, Mohammad Reza Golpayegani, said that it is incumbent on the officials in charge of directing the Iranian universities to enforce the guidelines of the supreme leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, on observing Islamic laws in universities and educational institutes.

He made the above statement at the tenth gathering of the chancellors of the regional branches of Payam-e Nur University here on Wednesday [22 May].

He added that the humanities and art subjects are among the most significant university subjects and called on the Iranian universities, particularly Payam-e Nur University, to take basic measures in this regard, such as publication of books in the field of humanities.

The minister also asked the Islamic seminaries to make more effort concerning the preparation of texts for the university books on humanities. [passage omitted]

Iran: Ansar-e Hezbollah Protests Speech by Majles Deputy

LD2805175996 *Tehran IRAN NEWS in English*
23 May 96 p 2

[Report by IRAN NEWS parliamentary desk: "Ansar-e Hezbollah Protest Speech of Ardebil MP"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN — Supporters of the Ansar-e Hezbollah group held demonstrations in front of the Majles building here on Monday [20 May] and Tuesday and protested the recent speech of MP from Ardebil, 'Ali Mohammad Gharibani.

The MP in his speech in the Majles on Sunday [19 May] had stated that monopolist actions of some groups and

their unfair stands would slow down the government's construction pace.

The Ansar-e Hezbollah also sent a letter to the Majles speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri demanding to go to the Majles and respond to the accusations leveled against them by the MP.

Iran: Paper Supports Keeping Higher Education in Public Sector

LD2705170296 *Tehran KEYHAN in Persian*
20 May 96 p 2

[Report by Hoseyn Shari'atmadari: "Note of the Day: Privatization, To What Extent?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The privatization of some public sectors and institutes, which has been on the government's agenda for some time, is regarded, on one hand, as a means to reduce government expenditure; on the other hand, the private sector, with the incentive to make a profit, would develop the privatized sectors and make them prosperous.

Although this view from the planners cannot be rejected totally, the experience of recent years has shown that privatization in our country has not been all that successful and in certain cases has achieved the opposite effect. The reasons for that lack of success should be reviewed by committed experts. But what is worrying about the privatization of various public sectors is the privatization of vital institutes and sectors, which include universities and institutes of higher education. Universities are the country's centers that produce specialists; their scientific and research products, in addition to the experts and specialists who are taught and trained in those institutes, will play a direct role in the country's future. Undoubtedly, the control of those vital and important institutes should not be given to the private sector.

Those officials and planners who have proposed the privatization of universities and institutes of higher education have ignored the fact that although investors naturally consider their own interests and profit, their actions have shown that they have the least regard for national interests and that they cannot see further than lining their own pockets. In recent years investors have been called on time and again to invest in the manufacturing and industrial sectors. However, a cursory look at their operations and massive cash flow would show clearly that their wealth, which is often ill-gotten and undeserved, is spent on handling goods needed by the people without the slightest concern for the difficulties of the people and of national interests.

Undoubtedly, if control of universities and institutes of higher education was to be given to that group, then committed and sympathetic people, who mostly come from the deprived and oppressed classes, would not be able to go to the universities and institutes of higher education and the door would be open only to the wealthy, who often have no problems. Furthermore, privatizing universities would slow down the progress of the country in the scientific and specialist sectors because experience has shown that the wealthy classes do not have the mentality, or at least the patience, for education and scientific research.

Fortunately, at his meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education and the heads of research institutes, the esteemed leader of the revolution [Ayatollah Khamene'i] forbade them from privatizing the universities and stressed: "In today's conditions, while there are foreign enemies and the country's scientific and propaganda machinery is weak, it would not be appropriate to privatize higher education and no-one should plan for it."

It is hoped that sympathetic officials will heed the wise warning of the esteemed leader of the revolution and consider the adverse consequences of privatizing the universities; and not think only of halting the privatization plan but seek logical and calculated ways to advance those vital institutes and bring them into line with Islamic values.

Iran: Paper on Need for Greater Expertise in Cultural Affairs

LD2705103996 *Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English* 22 May 96 p 2

[Commentary by H. Najafi from the "Viewpoint" column: "The Cultural Criteria"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Culture is a very important issue because it relates to human talent and mentality, which in turn shape the character of human beings. It is not comparable to any other criteria or concept."

Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, supreme leader of the Islamic revolution, made this statement in his meeting with officials of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance on 19 May.

If one studies the leader's address carefully it becomes apparent that he is not fully satisfied with the progress made in this field by the relevant institutions — including the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. He believes that the ministry's responsibilities in the cultural development of the country are relevant as well as crucial. It cannot be asserted that the leader castigated the ministry. However, he underlined the

need to efficiently implement the approved policies and called on ministry officials to pay serious attention to careful selection in cultural affairs.

It should also be pointed out here that Ayatollah Khamene'i commended Mostafa Mirsalim, minister of culture and Islamic guidance, and his aides for the efforts made in key areas, including the production of films, particularly about "the sacred defense" [Iran-Iraq war 1980-1988].

Notwithstanding the increase in the number of newspapers, magazines, publication of books, TV channels, and sponsoring of various cultural events during the post-Islamic revolution era, one somehow feels that the overall achievements in the cultural field are not up to the mark.

After studying the views of the leader on the subject it becomes obvious that from his outlook, also, much could have been done in this respect.

It is encouraging to note that he is fully aware of the root cause of the lack of sufficient progress in the development of the basic tools of culture: books, periodicals, newspapers, and television programs.

It would surely help the nation, particularly at this juncture of systematic cultural intrusions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, if those holding key positions in the cultural fields closely adhere to the caution by the leader of the Islamic Revolution, namely: "The ministry should abstain from selecting those who are ill-informed and unsophisticated despite their piety."

Though the advice was directed at the Guidance Ministry, it is obvious that all concerned should take note of it. Piety is essential, but, as clearly established by the learned leader, it can never compensate for lack of expertise and professionalism in any field, more so in the highly sophisticated and understandably influential area of producing admissible and effective cultural tools.

Iran: New Television, Radio Officials Appointed

LD2805191396 *Tehran ABRAR in Persian* 25 May 96 p 10

[Unattributed report: "Appointments in Voice and Vision"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The press office of the Voice and Vision Iran's radio and television reports that on the instructions of Pir-Moradian, director general of the news service of the Voice and Vision organization, Mahmud Ahmad-Afrazhi has been appointed the editor in chief of the English news service of the Vision [television].

The report adds that on the instructions of Abolqasem Qasem- Zahdeh, director general of international affairs of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Esmael Javanfakr has been appointed as the director in charge of news at the Sarajevo office.

Iran: Denial of Majles Candidates Questioned

96LA0223A Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Consultative Majles has been rightfully called the home of the nation because it is there that the nation's destiny is determined. In our country, Islamic and revolutionary values and the laws passed are among the most important factors to be taken into account by the deputies. For this reason, people must go into the Majles who submit to no demands or power other than dependence on values and attention to the demands of the people. The electees who go into the Majles with the above characteristics are the essence of the nation's virtues.

Attention to these valued truths have allowed lawmakers to take measures so that individuals, profiteers, violators, criminals, and most important of all, power groups, are not able to use special tricks, money or power to get into the home of the nation. It appears in this regard that rubber-stamp supervision by the respected Guardian Council is worthy of analysis and study. The home of the nation must be kept free of impermissible elements, and rejecting the competence of criminals, profiteers, while citing legal references, is the best tool for accomplishing this.

The use of such a tool will keep foreign advocates, hoarders of wealth, west-afflicted elements, and the supporters of the interests of power out of the competition. On the other hand, supporters of the Islam of Mohammad, revolutionary and tormented forces and supporters of the Constitution will have the opportunity to express themselves.

Along with these God-pleasing measures, one must ensure that an individual or individuals do not use the law as a means for settling personal or group accounts. Adequate attention must be paid to the lawmaker's intent and also to the wisdom of the law, and in its implementation the law must not contradict what it is intended to be. Converting the law to its opposite in implementation will undermine confidence. Without hesitation, the respected theologians on the respected Guardian Council are not persons who want to change or operate on the law because of personal or factional interests. These individuals would be the last ones to present tendentious reports or to express shallow views in violation of the law.

However, it is no secret to anyone that the Guardian Council can act improperly. Under the law, the Guardian Council has a high position. For this reason, its authority must be preserved. Preserving that respected council's authority requires that it maintain impartiality in practice with respect to the native individuals or groups, even if they come onto the scene with differing preferences and tastes.

It appears that a group of people, knowingly or unknowingly, are out to weaken the Guardian Council by doing things that cannot be justified and then attributing them to the council. In rejecting the competence of revolutionary and populist candidates, they are making it look as if, God forbid, the Guardian Council's supervision councils are placing themselves in opposition to the votes of the public.

The most devastating thing for the Guardian Council would be for the revolutionary factions and groups of the people to feel that it is in opposition to their lawful and legitimate rights. At the same time, very often the Council is in complete ignorance of the violations committed by individuals in lower positions. Through correct interpretation of the law and supervision of careful implementation, that council's supervision council must certainly be kept free of this. God forbid that special individuals and interested factions create a gap between a part of the public and the revolutionary forces and that respected council, by trampling the legitimate rights of the public, which are indeed the rights of mankind. If the competence of a religious, reputable, nationalist, and revolutionary individual or individuals is rejected for groundless reasons, who will answer for this? Preserving a believer's dignity and reputation, which as the gentlemen themselves have rightfully mentioned time and again from the pulpits and rostrums, is a higher duty than protecting the reputation of the Ka'ba. These religious commands and regulations are for such a day and situation. This is where God tests human beings.

One must take care to get through these divine tests with pride. If this happens, the people will treat politics exactly the same as our religion, and they will make our behavior their model.

In this regard, we must mention that in the recent era there have been violations in the rejection and confirmation of candidates which are absolutely unjustifiable. Apart from this, the competence of individuals has been confirmed in an organized and group fashion at enormous expense, and their goals are not clear. This is important because some of these individuals may be working in the interest of foreigners; it is very unlikely that any competent Muslim individual would be able to procure this much money or resources.

Apart from this, competence was approved for persons whose ties with the Great Satan were discovered during the occupation of the spy nest, and in these 17 years since the victory, they have concentrated on propaganda and working in the interest of our enemies and against the true crusaders in the sacred defense. Their latest measure was that despite the confirmation of several of them, they boycotted the elections. We want to put before the public's judgment the lives of several believers and true children of the revolution. Of course apart from these four, there are many others in the country whom they have confronted in this way, but for special reasons, and because these four were candidates for the Islamic Student Society Union and university graduates, we will confine ourselves to a description of who they are.

1. Engineer Seyyed Javad Emami: in terms of family he is a member of a clerical family. His father is one of the respected people in the region because of his religious practice, his simple way of living and his support for the revolution and the Imam. Academically, he has a master's degree in architecture.

Despite the fact that Mr. Emami was very young during the revolution, he bravely scuffled with SAVAK personnel. After the triumph of the revolution and throughout the war and the struggle with the mini-groups, he was completely at the service of the goals of the sacred defense and the revolution, fighting in basiji and command groups. Likewise, his own small crusade is completed by his involvement in the universities, and defending the revolution, the foundations of religion and culture in the Islamic Society. In addition to having fought at the fronts of the sacred defense and in the cultural and ideological arenas, Eng. Emami has crusaded as a true child of Islam, the revolution and the government, and has served on the faculty at the Science and Industry University.

Another page in his list of honors is his presence on the Board of Trustees and Central Council of the Union of Islamic Student Societies, and also his active involvement in the Council of Writers for the weekly publication PAYAM-E DANESHJU. Eng. Emami's most recent responsibility was as general manager of cultural affairs for the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, a position he resigned in order to take part in the elections. In fairness, if the competence of prominent academic, cultural, ideological and crusading figures such as him is to be rejected, who will replace them? Who will benefit if these brave and revolutionary persons serving the nation are removed?

2. Brother Parviz Safari

Brother Safari is a graduate in the field of roads and construction. He also has served the Islamic revolution since the beginning, and when the imposed war began he completely dedicated his life to the sacred defense. He was continuously present as a basiji, a crusader and a commander, and the results of this period are continuous and crushing wounds to his body. The sincere crusaders know brother Safari well.

Another part of his life is his continuous involvement in cultural, ideological and political affairs at the universities and his involvement in the episode of the Islamic Student Movement. His membership on the board of trustees and the Central Council of the Union as an Islamic and legal entity with a record of more than 10 years, and also his membership on the PAYAM-E DANESHJU Council of Writers, have made of Safari an independent, revolutionary, courageous and aware figure. Indeed, if the competence of such clever, religious, revolutionary, and combative figures who are serious opponents of foreigners, people who worship foreigners, figures who are also advocates for the legitimate rights of the people is rejected, who will answer for it? Has Safari committed any sin, other than the opposing bullying and hypocrisy?

It is worth mentioning that these two brothers initially had their competence confirmed by the executive council, but then their competence was rejected by the supervision council for reasons that are still unknown to us.

3. Mohammad Salamati

Brother Mohammad Salamati began his ideological and political activities before entering the university in high school in the Islamic society and also in the party's student union. When he first entered Tehran University he was active in the Islamic Students Society and in the university student unit of the Islamic Republican Party, thereby deepening his political and cultural struggles.

Because of his understanding of social issues and also his insistence on the principles of the imam's line, Brother Salamati is a recognized element in the student Islamic movement. Brother Salamati's steadfast resistance to the gang in power and to bullying and hypocrisy is praiseworthy in the eyes of those who know him. Because of his writing abilities, this brother is one of the influential members of the PAYAM-E DANESHJU Writer's Council, the executive editor of ISLAMIC UNION, the union's publication, and also a member of the council's Board of Trustees and Central Council. Those who know Salamati do not consider the rejection of his competence to be the result of any weakness on his part, but rather an unforgivable sin on the part of some of those who are enforcing the law.

4. Engineer Mohammad 'Ali Izadi

Because of the circumstances of his life, brother Izadi has a different story. We believe that any fair person who studies the story of this brother's life will form an interesting image about the method of operating of the supervision council, or anyone else. In reality, if a complete judgment is to be made about the way the brothers on the supervision council operate, and the profit and loss of its decisions for the believers and children of the revolution, one of the prominent indications would be the way it dealt with brother Izadi. We will say no more than a few words about him.

1. He is the brother of three martyrs who were leaders.
2. His family is respected by the religious and revolutionary people and also by the people of science, religion, and erudition in Shiraz.
3. His life is full of crusading and combat for Islam, the revolution and the government. For example, one must mention his discovery of more than billions of tumans in abuses in the Ministry of Oil. Because of this he was encouraged and endorsed in writing by His Holiness the Imam.

He has also engaged in interesting struggles in the Foundation for the Oppressed and Wounded War Veterans as chief inspector in the years 1368 - 1369 [21 March 1989 - 20 March 1991]. Those who know Brother Izadi well know that not only is there not a single dark spot in his individual or family life, but that he has spent his entire life fighting to establish the Truth. Who is responsible for rejecting the competence of this true child of the revolution? Is it a crime to attend the defense trial for the executive editor of PAYAM-E DANESHJU or for the brother of three martyrs to support the brother of two martyrs? Is it right to reject the competence of the likes of Izadi?

It is worth mentioning that this brother's competence was endorsed by the executive council and the supervision council, but for unknown reasons his file was not sent to the Guardian Council. If necessary, the documentation for all the above cases will be printed.

In any case we have printed this so that the respected members of the Guardian Council will know what individual or individuals are engaged in dubious activities on their behalf. The gentlemen must come to their senses because this is an activity that will make the true forces of the revolution pessimistic about certain things that have been done.

It is definitely people like these true children of the revolution who will stand beside the committed clergy in opposing foreign agents, counterrevolutionaries, capitalist leeches, and also gold hoarders. God forbid that the

best people should be put aside. God forbid that a group of people should try to reject the competence of individuals who are acceptable to the people.

Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU on Propaganda

96LA0223B Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Note—The following article was published in issue number 2 of ETTEHAD-E ESLAMI, the internal organ of the Union of Islamic Student Societies. We present it again to our esteemed readers because of its importance and pertinence to the nation's current situation.

One of the propaganda focal points recently stressed by the respected speaker of the Majles is the theory of removing the clergy from the revolution and the government. This idea may turn out to be a working principle for some people; that is, the mere fact that it is discussed by a highly-placed clergyman, in view of this debate's background, especially at the beginning of the Constitutional Revolution, is enough to gain its acceptance. When this group hears the idea or the debate discussed, they go looking for its proofs without studying or analyzing the matter. This matter has great importance for Islamic society. As His Holiness the late Imam (peace be upon him) said, "Islam without the clergy is like a country without doctors." Because of the matter's importance, suddenly they justify every issue based on one principle. They design every action and activity by others, especially Mr. Nateq-Nuri's critics and rivals, or even the opponents of his friends, even if they are clergy, around expelling the clergy from political affairs, or they look away from anything he or his clerical colleagues do, even if it is improper, solely because one ought not to weaken the clergy.

Of course this analysis and conclusion pertains to part of society, but there is another group that wants to expel the clergy and engages in deep analysis. This group does not consider the mere discussion of the subject by a high official to be enough reason to establish the matter as truth. Rather, they try to evaluate the issue in all its aspects. In this short article we will adopt the second approach. Based on the importance we attribute to this issue, we will set out to analyze.

The first question in the mind of anyone who hears or reads the theory about expelling the clergy is, who wants to be the one to carry out such a plot? Does the respected speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles have convincing, logical and reasoned arguments for this claim or point of view of his? Has something happened, or has there been some special change in society? Is an individual or a group behind such a

plot? God forbid, have the people made a decision to do this? Unfortunately, none of these things has been mentioned in Mr. Nateq-Nuri's statements. The only thing of concern to Mr. Nateq-Nuri is that he constantly compares the current situation with the beginning of the constitutional revolution. Of course making a comparison between the Fifth Majles of the Islamic Republic and the Fifth Majles of the constitutional revolution of the monarchy is more hocus-pocus than it is a real comparison! The only thing they have in common is the word "Fifth." There is no real similarity between two social realities.

The respected speaker of the Majles himself will have to explain why he used comparisons of this kind as evidence, but can it be accepted that a super-social power had the power to oversee everything both at the beginning of the constitutional revolution and also the Islamic revolution, that it ran everything for a specific period of time, which was five Majles terms in both cases, and then in the Fifth Majles the elimination of the clergy is always to be repeated? Mr. Nateq-Nuri will also reject this idea, more than all the others.

As for our conclusion concerning the principle of the claim, there are several points:

First: In view of the fact that all the affairs, from the powers to other things, especially the nation's propaganda apparatus, are permanently in the hands of him and his respected colleagues, no one has the ability to do the slightest thing outside this circle of power. Even if an individual or a group, even the militant clergy association [rowhaniyun-e mobarez], decided to oust the clergy (?), they certainly would not have the ability to do it.

Second: It is possible that this view could be pursued by a non-official organization or group, and sometimes by the general public. Perhaps this second possibility is more what Mr. Nateq-Nuri had in mind. because in His Holiness Mehdi Kani's speech it was clearly stated that "let the people not be fooled and ..." With regard to this second possibility there are several significant points.

1. In the great Islamic revolution led by His Holiness Imam Khomeini, the people demonstrated that they have confidence in the clergy more than any other group. Therefore, the people are naturally interested in the clergy, and no power can take away this interest, nor can they put the clergy aside for any other reason. This is a completely unfair judgment.

2. The ideological, social and political relationship between the people, the clergy and the authorities is a firm and ideological relationship, which has been

strengthened in current circumstances more than at any other time. Even though under the idolaters the government was trying to drive a wedge between the clergy and society with poisonous propaganda, thanks to the Islamic revolution this wedge has been completely eliminated, and the government always makes propaganda about the unity between the clergy and the other classes. For this reason it is better, instead of saying things that are worrying, to talk about its positive side and to speak always of the blessing of the unity between the clergy, the university and other classes.

3. In view of the two foregoing points, it is possible to observe that imperialism is plotting in any case and attention must be given to enemy plots. One of these plots is to separate the clergy and the people, or to isolate one of the two. This is completely correct, but the way it is discussed is important. It should not be discussed in such a way that the enemy gets what he wants and thinks that there are definitely good things in post-revolutionary Iran, especially not on the threshold of the elections for the Fifth Majles and the president of the republic.

If Mr. Nateq-Nuri is worried that sometimes part of society is critical of the insider clergy and for this reason it is possible that their liking for such individuals will be less, this is something that is not confined to the non-clerical people. The clergy include learned scholars, seminary students, Friday imams and others. There are many people who are critical of the existing situation. It is therefore appropriate that Mr. Nateq-Nuri make all the clergy answerable for this dissatisfaction or criticism, or else not count on a plot to remove the clergy. If such groundless fears exist, this will mean that his colleagues will think of themselves as innocent, perfect, the shadow of God and the absolute rulers of the people, and whenever an individual, a group or even the public criticizes them, it will be said immediately that it is an enemy plot, that these people are ignorant or accusations like this. The results of such groundless fears will also be that the people will be eliminated from affairs, no one will have the courage to speak and revolutionary society will become a dead society.

The people will accept nothing less than the justice of 'Ali (peace be upon him) and the decisiveness of Imam Khomeini (peace be upon him) from the insider clergy. The people accept simplicity and the common touch more than presidentiality, imposing presence, and the like. The people expect the highest executive figure to behave like them, and they expect him also to be in harsh circumstances for making a living, that he, like the majority of society, will have difficulty sending his children to school. The people expect the clergy to

implement justice without regard for relationships and other considerations. For this reason, they are always looking for religious scholars. It appears that the people are completely honest in their claims. Accusing them will solve nothing. One must study and discover where the problems are so that have made this concern arise. This is a subject we will discuss, God willing.

Iran: Separation of Religion, Politics Seen

96LA0223D Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 pp 3-5

[FBIS Translated Text] One of the features of the imam's line is not separating religion from politics. Politics, in the view of the Islam of Mohammad, carries the concept of obtaining the rights of the oppressed from the oppressor, fighting the oppressor and supporting the oppressed. Mixing religion and politics means implementing such a policy to achieve rule by divine laws and commands, which is the same as achieving a government in society based on justice and spirituality. Unfortunately, with the passage of many long years since the beginning of Islam, for various reasons, including the imperialist plot, this characteristic has gradually been forgotten.

With the spread of definitions of politics, such as "the science of power," and also seeing politics as the use of deception and trickery to gain control of the government and spread interpretations of this type to the Islamic nations, the face of the Islam of Mohammad has gradually been insulted, and with the appearance of Americanized Islam, it has been completely changed.

As the one who revived the Islam of Mohammad, Imam Khomeyni (peace be upon him) gave new life to this genuine Islamic characteristic (making no separation between religion and politics) and made it one of the prominent characteristics of the imam's line. A point that must not be overlooked, however, is that the imam (peace be upon him) not only established this principle in word and slogan but also through his actions, and by adopting comprehensive and all-encompassing methods in his policies.

An example of this attribute of the imam's line was his way of dealing with the people and his point of view concerning them. In reality his method in this matter was reminiscent of the ways of the saints of religion and religious practices. He always called himself the servant (not the ruler) of the people. This was evident in his personal and social practices. Although in terms of the love and the liking that the people had for him he held the highest place in their eyes, in his personal life he never sought enjoyment or the resources of welfare and

ease. He always tried to be in harmony and sympathy with the deprived and oppressed people of society.

In his social and political methods he even refused to have his children (despite their possessing the necessary worthiness) occupying public positions, lest some people draw incorrect conclusions from this and open the door to an improper practice in government based on nepotism and clan control. He also had confidence in true public participation in public affairs, he relied on public forces in various areas of public life, and he gave adequate importance to valuing the people, especially the deprived people, the ones he called the shanty-dwellers.

Another example of the interdependence between religion and politics in the imam's line was his way of dealing with the enemy. In fighting the enemy, he relied obviously on God, and following that he directed his attention to the astonishing power of the people. Then, when the enemy threat reached its highest level, the true manifestation of this belief became evident in his positions and objectives.

The imam's (peace be upon him) decisive position on 21 Bahman 1357 [21 January 1979] on the defeat of martial law, when martial law had set out to put the public down and there was no ability to stand up against the enemy, his clear position toward the superpower of the age, the U.S. Government, when dozens of enemy warships were stationed in the Persian Gulf, that the United States could make no mistake, and other things too numerous to mention, all bespeak the practical effects of mixing religion and politics.

Unfortunately, sometimes some of the officials, though they claim that religion and politics are interdependent and even quarrel with others in supporting this position, behave differently in practice. From the overall political behavior and speech, some people infer that there is no problem with certain kinds of un-Islamic behavior such as trickery, lies and other things, for the sake of political objectives. Clearly, this type of thinking, even if it involves claims about not separating religion and politics, ultimately will not result in that separation.

In Imam Khomeyni's (peace be upon him) methods, in the matter of confronting the enemy we have seen that characteristics such as a clear and decisive approach, not compromising on principles, deep, heart-felt belief in the ability of divine forces to triumph over materialistic forces and confidence in the people were striking. These characteristics made the Islamic revolution look so glorious that the world's imperialists and people seeking domination are still terrified of Khomeyni's memory and name.

However, if we do not believe in divine aid and the power of the presence of the people, and this is only a slogan for us, then that clarity and decisiveness will be lacking in confronting the enemy. One day we try to advise the enemy how best to protect his interests (!?), and then another day we speak of not compromising and our hatred for the enemy. Another day we remind the enemy of the limits and extent of our relations, and another day we set forth conditions for expanding relations!! In short, what is no longer in dispute is our hostility toward an enemy who fundamentally rejects this Islamic government. Yet it is as if we do not believe that material technology can be conquered with divine aid. It is as if the enemy, who has not yet succeeded in destroying us, has for that reason been fooled by politics of this type! It is as if the enemy has had no experience with these games. It is as if we have forgotten that our politics must be exactly the same as our religion. It is as if some people interpret the unity of religion and politics as meaning that politics belongs to special individuals and a special class of society, and others do not have the competence to intervene.

It is appropriate to think again about the imam's thinking and his line, which is the very manifestation of the Islam of Mohammad, and to compare what we do ourselves with Western thinking, so that we will know to what extent our actions conform with the imam's line. In the foregoing sentences we have discussed some aspects of the Imam's line, and now we will give examples of Western thought in the words of one of the prominent founders of Western political practices.

Niccolo Machiavelli believed: "You must never give the real reason to others (the people) for something you have done unless there is some benefit in stating it, because it is harmful for every person to have confidence in others.

"To make use of others, first one must choose short-term goals, second one must not believe in any principle that creates limitations on maneuvers, obtaining privilege or bargaining.

"One cannot pay that much attention to morality and spirituality, because without lies, deceit, fraud, plots and opportunism, it is not possible to take advantage of others."

It is clear that what is in the foregoing points is not to be found anywhere in Islamic politics, and we must be extremely careful not to be caught up in the enemy's enticing scientific words and definitions. We must be certain that Islamic politics have no points in common with the politics of imperialism.

Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU on Meaning of Votes
96LA0223C Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Any government's ability to endure depends on its legitimacy. As the saying goes, legitimacy is acceptability to the public. Illegitimate governments are governments who have come to power against the nation's wishes, by force, and under threat. They generally do not last long. These governments try to appear legitimate. To do this, they use everything from propaganda tricks and deluding the public to benefiting from terror and pressure to give the impression that they have the entire nation with them and have no opposition, or if there is opposition that it is insignificant and not worth mentioning.

Among the types of governments, Islamic government is one of the few that has been able, both in its emergence and in its continuation, to truly get the people involved in public affairs. It has been able to benefit from the astonishing power of the people in various areas, including the triumph of the revolution, the imposed war, and other things. In this regard, one of the long-standing serious debates in our society, which has been critiqued and studied by individuals and political factions, is the one about the extent of the public's role and participation in the Islamic government.

During the part of the revolution when the crisis was to fight rule by the idolaters, taking part in marches was the most conspicuous and perhaps the only way for the people to participate in advancing the movement. Gradually, however, as the revolution became triumphant and the preliminary phases of forming the Islamic government began, this level of participation was no longer adequate for involvement by the people in determining their destiny. For example, now that we are in the reconstruction stage, the government cannot conclude from a public demonstration march that its intended reconstruction and development programs have been confirmed by the people. Attracting public attention now needs more efficient and effective leverage. The use of such things as political parties, the press, and other things as ways to attract public participation in determining their political fate is something that is significant in its own right.

In reality, a government based on the votes of the people expresses the ideas of the classes in the nation, and then it must plan on that basis. If the government is to use its own staff to compile the plan, and then later the ministries, companies, and government institutions announce their support of the plan by issuing statements at every stage, or if in the elections for the representatives of the people government elements are presented to the public as the ones worthy of the task,

and then other elements from the government, using government resources or titles, are to be responsible for the propaganda for those candidates and the situation takes on such an air of official government sanction that an effort is made even in all of the propaganda to make the flag of the Islamic Republic an official symbol, in this case the claim of public participation is imaginary and useless.

If the votes and the views of the public are to be taken into consideration in this government, the people must be able to express their thoughts and ideas from within parties and groups arising from the masses (which have no government connection). In addition, within the framework of the law, they should have the right to hold marches, gatherings, speeches and the like without illogical limitations.

These points are the same criteria that bring into realization the concept of true mutual cooperation between the public and the government. In any case, if we accept that the criterion is the vote of the public, the possibility must also be created for manifesting this vote.

Iran: Swiss Company's Debt Totals Millions

96LA0224A Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite the fame and acceptability of Iranian caviar as a unique product in the world and the existence of eager customers, in the last few years on various justifications fishery officials have made a policy of primarily limiting the foreign sales of this native product to two companies.

One of the two is a Swiss company called the Porimex AG Company, which is owned and managed by an Iranian. In recent years this company has used special financial and trade means in its transactions with the Iran Fisheries Company, including credit sales with long-term repayment and products priced without calculating their usual international profits or collecting a credit deposit. The volume of this company's debt to the Fisheries Company is in the millions of dollars. Fisheries Company officials have taken various measures in this regard in order to reduce the Swiss Porimex AG company's debt and to reinforce its financial foundation, including taking returns in the year 1372 [21 March 1993 - 20 March 1994] on about 38 tons of caviar left over in the warehouse, which was no longer suitable for European consumption and was therefore sold domestically at a price lower than the level of the Porimex AG company's debt.

In addition to this, last year in the month of Khordad [22 May - 21 June] another agreement was signed between the Fisheries Company and the Swiss company

under which the Fisheries Company will convert the Porimex AG Company's dollar debt to marks, and also the enormous dollar indebtedness in question will be reduced to just over 5 million marks. The Fisheries Company agreed to have this indebtedness repaid over a five-year period without calculating any profit.

Likewise, based on the agreement, 5.5 tons of free caviar was sent to the company under discussion. Unfortunately, all of these financial means did not improve the situation. On 8/25/1373 [16 November 1994], about four months after the agreement was signed, a telex was sent to the Fisheries Company from the Swiss Credit Bank officially announcing the Porimex AG Company's bankruptcy to its debtors, meaning the Iran Fisheries Company.

Here, there is no harm in discussing the good will, or God forbid the ill will of those who were involved in this episode, and the determination will have to be made by other authorities. It is clear, however, that as a result of the aforementioned measures, millions of dollars in irreparable losses was incurred by the Public Treasury.

In the financial report for the period ending 12/29/1373 [19 March 1995] by the Board of Trade in the Iran Fisheries Company, the amount of debt lost to the bankrupt company was announced as being in excess of \$10.281 million, in addition to 6,764,000 German marks. That figure was accounted in the company's books as debt whose collection is in doubt. Thus the Fisheries Company has brought on millions of dollars in bad debts and foreign exchange losses arising from parasitic transactions, estimated by the Accounting Court to total more than \$1.5 million.

It is expected that the pertinent officials will explain, in a world where even the most naive individuals do not consider it logical or rational to sell on credit without a deposit or security, settling for only a few bad checks and promissory notes. Based on what government interest and on what legal authorization were millions of dollars of goods sold to this bankrupt company on credit? How did it happen that through much effort and through the use of various methods, the amount of debt was reduced, and then finally the party in question ended the affair by declaring bankruptcy? How did it go beyond these losses to establish a new company, and resume operations with the use of windfall monies?

Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU Surveys Readers

96LA0224B Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Moradi]

[FBIS Translated Text] With the resumed publication of the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU, we went among the people to get their views on this publication.

[Question] Please give us your opinion concerning the weekly publication PAYAM-E DANESHJU.

Mehdi Karkhaneh, student: PAYAM-E DANESHJU is the nation of Iran. It tells us the things we don't know. One of the criteria for advanced and developed countries is the existence of free and populist publications. Tell the officials not to take away the right of the people to express themselves by putting pressure on publications such as the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU.

Mr. Hoseyni, student: I used to read this publication before it was stopped, and I am very happy now that I see it back in the press kiosks. I ask the insiders in this publication to write in the next issue about the reason the publication was stopped.

Reza Absuri: PAYAM-E DANESHJU is a publication that writes the truth, and for that reason it is loved by the entire nation of Iran.

Mohammad Nurani: Because of the confidence they have in this publication in defending the rights of the nation, the people will vote for the candidates that it presents.

With regard to the embezzlement trial, I think this has not produced good results and that all the perpetrators have not been identified and punished.

Gholamreza Keshavarz: It is not right for the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU to be prosecuted and pressured by the gang in power merely because of conveying information and making disclosures.

Parsa'i: The atmosphere prevailing in the nation's press is one of self-censorship. We have few publications that reflect reality and the people. The newspaper HAMSHAHERI is a newspaper of advertisements. As for the newspaper ETTELA'AT [information], the one thing it does not have is information.

[Question] What in your view is the main reason for embezzlement, financial corruption and political and economic bottlenecks?

Omid Rosta'i, teacher: The reason for all of these harmful things is the nation's ailing bureaucracy. In my view, one must not have excessive confidence in

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Iran: Foreign Exchange Spending Questioned

96LA0224C Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU
in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] It is said that the entire amount of some \$150 million in foreign exchange revenues during the First Economic and Social Development Plan, earned through the sale of oil, foreign borrowing, non-oil exports, and other means, was all spent without complying with the National Annual Budget Liquidation Law during the period of the Five-Year Plan and during the time of Mr. 'Adeli's tenure as chief of the Central Bank.

According to the Budget Liquidation Law, the foreign exchange expenditures in the Five-Year Plan must be classified each year and then carried out based on the legal articles and notes. Unfortunately, the above law was not observed in any of the some \$150 million in foreign exchange revenues, and the documents, justifications, and legal references for investigation still do not exist.

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[Report by Moradi]

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[Question] Please give us your opinion concerning the weekly publication PAYAM-E DANESHJU.

Mehdi Karkhaneh, student: PAYAM-E DANESHJU is the nation of Iran. It tells us the things we don't know. One of the criteria for advanced and developed countries is the existence of free and populist publications. Tell the officials not to take away the right of the people to express themselves by putting pressure on publications such as the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU.

Mr. Hoseyni, student: I used to read this publication before it was stopped, and I am very happy now that I see it back in the press kiosks. I ask the insiders in this publication to write in the next issue about the reason the publication was stopped.

Reza Absuri: PAYAM-E DANESHJU is a publication that writes the truth, and for that reason it is loved by the entire nation of Iran.

Mohammad Nurani: Because of the confidence they have in this publication in defending the rights of the nation, the people will vote for the candidates that it presents.

With regard to the embezzlement trial, I think this has not produced good results and that all the perpetrators have not been identified and punished.

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Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Businessmen Urge Steps To Lure Foreign Investors

BK2405115696 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 23 May 96

[Report by Gopal Tiwari — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, May 22 — Foreign traders keen to invest in Nepal are still not convinced whether the invested capital would yield fruitful results due to market limitations and weak infrastructure situation in the country.

Although the government has announced lucrative packages to attract foreign investors, the implementation side is "very weak" for which timely redressal is needed, prominent businessmen say.

Padma Jyoti, President of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) says, with the competition worldwide to lure foreign investment, Nepal has to create a more favourable atmosphere than the existing one doing away with avoidable hurdles. He said the market and infrastructure are still weak which have obstructed foreign investors from coming to Nepal.

Padma Jyoti complains that policy on paper is good, but implementation is not done properly. "We have to understand that foreign investors will only be interested to invest in Nepal provided that there are no difficult circumstances while running the industry and political stability is ensured."

Foreign investors have shown particular interest to invest in tourism, hydropower and agro-based industries.

According to Jyoti, there are about 300 projects with foreign investments in the country. What is necessary is to sustain and promote them by creating a good environment.

When asked Director General of Department of Industry Bhanu Prasad Acharya said prior to adopting economic reforms, times were difficult for domestic industrialists and foreign investors. But now, positive signs are evident.

According to Acharya, the lack of skilled manpower, power shortage and other limitations would make life difficult for joint venture businesses.

"If industrialists are facing problems to open and operate industries easily, they have to identify the problems. We are ever ready to help them to resolve their problems," Acharya pledged.

Industrialist Banwari Lal Mittal said, "Nepali policy makers should understand that there must be a convinc-

ing package to attract foreign investors. Politicians also should be well appraised about the industrial policies."

Industrialist and First Vice President of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) Chiranjibi Lal Agrawal says government's policy is good but the implementation of policy is below the mark. Agrawal further emphasized on political stability to attract foreign investment.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Nawaz Reports 'Salient Features' of PML-N Manifesto

BK2505153596 Islamabad THE NATION in English 25 May 96 pp 1, 5

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE—PML-N [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz] President and Opposition Leader Mian Nawaz Sharif while expressing optimism about his return to power has spelt out salient features of the election manifesto of the Muslim League which include:

Cancellation of the plots allotted to the parliamentarians on the very first day of the formation of the PML-N government, ban on the import of duty-free limousines on the second day and ban on medical treatment abroad on the third day.

Addressing party workers at his Model town residence on Friday morning, Mian Nawaz Sharif said the Muslim League would take its struggle against this "band of exploiters" (the present rulers) to the logical conclusion. He said: "After coming into power we will obliterate the culture of corruption and lawlessness deeply entrenched in our society and those against whom charges of corruption will be proved will be prohibited from: contesting elections forever".

The weekly "open kutchery" was also addressed by Punjab Opposition Leader Mian Shahbaz Sharif, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad, Ch [Chaudhary] Akhtar Rasool, Syed Tabish Alvari, President Karachi Bar Association Iqbal Riaz Gill, Inamullah Khan Niazi, Mian Fazle Haq and other leaders of the PML-N and its auxiliaries.

Brother Shahbaz credited Nawaz Sharif for having revived in the Muslim League spirit of the Independence Movement.

Continuing his address Mian Nawaz said he had extended an unconditional support to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in the National Assembly for constituting a judicial commission for eradicating corruption but "she (Benazir) got the proposal voted out on the basis of

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Text] About half s to the Fifth Isl competence rejected l. Yet the rejectio e candidates rem

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the majority". He said while the resolution was put to vote he observed that many Treasury members wanted to support it but ministers and advisers stopped them from doing so, and they opposed the resolution against their own conscience.

The Opposition Leader, who has been stressing the need for putting an end to corruption and other ills from the society for quite sometime, especially after the launching of Imran Khan's Tehrik-i-Insaf, said he was not disappointed after what had happened in the National Assembly and would now launch a movement to mobilise public opinion against this menace. At this point he announced the first three-day agenda of his government: Ban on the import of duty-free limousines, cancellation of plots and ban on medical treatment abroad.

He said one could not expect any good from the present rulers who themselves were the part of this corruption Mafia and had got exempted a duty of Rs 16.2 million [rupees] on the import of two limousines. He said this "theft" had been committed by none else but the Prime Minister of a poor country where millions were living under poverty line. He regretted that this unhealthy trend had now spilled over into the provinces starting from Punjab where the Chief Minister had been allowed to import a duty-free car.

According to Mian Nawaz he was once told by a foreign head of the state that he had gifted separate cars to Benazir Bhutto and her mother Nusrat Bhutto during the previous PPP [Pakistan People's Party] regime. He asked the Prime Minister and her mother to tell the nation where were these expensive gifts while the car "I had been gifted by a foreign dignitary was sent to the Cabinet Division pool the day I had resigned".

Mian Nawaz had many tales to tell the people about the extravagant spendings of Benazir Bhutto during her previous term. Having castigated the government for plundering the national wealth and patronising corruption he then moved on to assure the poor masses that they had not to lead a miserable life for long because the Muslim League government would concentrate on ameliorating socio-economic condition first than doing anything else. He said the time was not far when children of the poor suffering from cancer and other such diseases would be sent abroad for medical treatment as this "privilege" would now be withdrawn from the so-called privileged class.

Pakistan: Leader of Al-Ansar Movement Interviewed

96AS0025A Peshawar AL-JIHAD in Arabic Mar 96
pp 20-22

[Interview with Al-Shaykh Sa'adatullah Khan, Al-Ansar Movement Leader, by Muhammad Salim; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] To complete the interviews it started in the previous edition with jihad organizations operating in the Kashmir arena, AL-JIHAD had to interview Al-Shaykh Sa'adatullah Khan, leader of Al-Ansar Movement, the second biggest jihad military movement in Kashmir, to learn about this movement, to introduce it to Muslims, and to highlight the most important ideas on which it is founded.

[Salim] Can you tell us about the rise of Al-Ansar Movement and about its espousal of the jihad for God as a solution for today's Muslims?

[Khan] With the start of the 1980's, we went to Afghanistan in the wake of the Soviet invasion of that country. Our only goal at the time was to stop the red invasion of that Muslim country. While heading for Afghanistan in the company of shaykhs Irshad Ahmad, Fadl-al-Rahman, and 'Abd-al-Samad, it never occurred to us that we would later establish a jihad organization flying the banner of international jihad. The tragic acts committed by the Jewish enemy occupying Palestine against innocent Muslims had their impact on our choice of the path of jihad and martyrdom. This choice was also made in obedience to the Koran verses and to hadiths which urge jihad and the need for Islam's prevalence over all else in confirmation of God's words, may He be exalted, "It is He Who has sent His Apostle with guidance and the Religion of Truth to proclaim it over all religion, even if the infidels detest it." [Koran 48:28]

When we took part in the jihad in Afghanistan, we saw what the phrase "Allah is the greatest" can do to God's enemies and how it terrifies them. We saw the end of the Soviet Army, which was the world's second largest army. We learned as of that time that we can confront the United States, Israel, India, and all of the world's infidel countries, especially those that occupy Muslim lands and create corruption and injustice in them. It is then that Al-Ansar Movement came into existence.

[Salim] What are the consequences, experiences, and lessons resulting from the Afghan jihad?

[Khan] The most important results and benefits are practical knowledge of the value of the phrase "Allah is the greatest" and trust in God. Thousands of enemy troops facing 30 or 40 of us mujahidin did not scare us.

We scored victories and our enemy retreated. Neither tanks nor planes could stand in our way and we no longer gave them the same material importance we had attached to them before we took part in the battles and before we confronted forces armed to the teeth with planes and tanks.

[Salim] What is your opinion of the current developments in Afghanistan?

[Khan] The great change accomplished by the jihad in Afghanistan is the creation of a new society. All agencies of the past communist regime have been changed, beginning with the administration and the army and ending with the population structure. In Pakistan, for example, when Nawaz Sharif departed and Benazir Bhutto replaced him, the change in this case was the replacement of an old government by a new one, but the armies of civil and administrative servants, army troops, and others have not changed. In Afghanistan, a fundamental and complete change has taken place, beginning with the top-ranking official and ending with the most minor civil servant. The problem facing Afghanistan currently is that everything is in utter confusion and that some communists have infiltrated and entered sensitive state positions under the guise of mujahidin. Most Afghan leaders cannot recognize the majority of civil servants who have come forth to serve the Islamic state in Afghanistan. What I mean is that Afghanistan needs three years at least to restore security and stability; to rebuild what the long war has destroyed; to begin reconstruction and development; and to establish the aspired Islamic regime.

What gladdens the heart is what the religious students and ulema are doing these days to purge the city of Kandahar of corruption, vice, and bandits. We visited Kandahar during the jihad days and we told ourselves: When an Islamic state is established in Afghanistan, Kandahar will be the last place there in which Islamic rule will be founded. But God be thanked, a crowd of religious students and ulema have now been able to enter the city and to purge it of its various vices. It has become a safe bastion. Even though poor conditions prevail these days in Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif, most Afghan districts and provinces are safe and secure and one cannot see in them anything violating Islam. It is impossible to find a bottle of alcohol or a naked woman there, especially in the cities of Khost, Herat, and Helmond.

Working these days to undermine Afghanistan is the western media that is hostile to the Islamic solution and to the creation of an Islamic state. The media does not talk about Khost as it was yesterday, when alcohol and prostitution prevailed, and Khost as it is today,

where chastity and modesty prevail. The media does not point out the fruits the jihad has borne. It doesn't talk about the Afghan provinces that enjoy stability and security. Moreover, the parties that sided with the Soviet invasion; embraced the communist creed; and stayed out of the country throughout the war are trying to disturb the country's tranquillity and to undermine the jihad accomplishments. As for the mujahidin, the emigrants, and the families that have sacrificed father, son, and brother, they do not feel the complex of inferiority and treason. The straying parties seek, among other things, to dissuade Muslims from carrying on with the jihad to liberate usurped lands; to restore lost rights; and to fly the banner of Islam in such countries as Tajikistan, Kashmir, Bosnia, Palestine, Algeria, and other places. These parties also try to distort the jihad duty and to scare Muslims away from it on the pretext that the Afghanistan lesson will be repeated. So let us beware of the poisons of the anti-Islam and anti-Muslim western media.

[Salim] What role does the Al-Ansar Movement play in the ongoing jihad in the occupied Kashmir against invading Indian forces?

[Khan] The first thing we considered after declaring jihad in the occupied valley was the weapon of teaching and education. Because education in the occupied Kashmir is controlled by the Indian Government and its armies who are poised like a sword over people's heads, we had to consider how to first return the people to their faith because the only thing the people know about Islam was its name. The Indian Government has contorted the image of Islam by spreading lies and by intentionally distorting the Islamic faith. So, we focused on teaching and educating the youth and we encouraged them to rub elbows with ulema and to participate in their councils before we gave them military training and provided them with arms. So we had to teach them what jihad is and what Islam is. Subsequently, the youth returned to their mountains, villages, and battlefronts, clinging to the Islamic attire, maintaining their prayers, fasting more days than duty requires, and eagerly keeping night prayer vigils. The old slogans which the people of Kashmir raised, such as freedom and liberation, have changed totally. The new slogans are: We work to raise the banner of Islam and to elevate Allah's word; we fight so God's faith will become manifest, so all faith will belong to Allah, and so Allah alone will be worshipped throughout the land.

At the outset of the jihad, the brothers who fought the Indian enemy would enter homes in the name of jihad and Islam, extort money, and harm the population, but after receiving a degree of education and enlightenment, the mujahidin have changed the way they treat people

and cooperation has developed between them and the population. So, the concern that worried the inhabitants exists no longer. As a result of these positions, Al-Ansar Movement has pleased the masses and gained their sympathy and confidence. This fact is the biggest weapon in the occupied territories and it has forced the government itself to acknowledge that the movement carries out 30 percent of its operations in the occupied valley itself.

Al-Ansar Movement is eager to get the mujahidin together and to unite their ranks because this is a religious duty and a legitimate demand. We have also urged the movement mujahidin to persevere and endure the harm that occurs from time to time as a result of misunderstanding that develops among mujahidin. We have urged them not to allow themselves to be victims of the snares and poisons spread by the Indian intelligence, who are found in large numbers in the occupied territories. Since we started our participation in the jihad in the occupied Kashmir, we have refused to aim our weapons at brother mujahidin, despite the sedition propagated by the Indian agencies. We have pledged to Allah that our weapons will remain aimed at the Indian occupation and its agents.

[Salim] What are the problems facing the mujahidin in Kashmir?

[Khan] Numerous problems face the jihad, including financial aid that is nearly non-existent because of the rumors spread about the Afghan jihad. Those concerned with aiding the jihad, especially in the Arab Gulf states, such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and even Pakistan, refuse to extend a helping hand. Muslims in Europe now say: We have helped Afghanistan, and look at the result. We do not want another Kashmir. Using these pretexts, they refuse to assist and aid us. The jihad in Afghanistan triumphed over the Soviet invasion and its communist agents, thanks to the cooperation of Muslims everywhere and to their support for the jihad with money and soul. They even competed with each other in this regard. Today, when we go to Kashmir, Tajikistan, or Burma, we only hear one phrase: Unite and get together so we will support you. Meanwhile, many of our brothers are incarcerated in enemy prisons. It behooves them to help us and to contribute to the release of captured and imprisoned brothers. In the occupied valley, thousands of innocent people are occupied, and tens upon tens of chaste and pure women are raped. Meanwhile, nobody stirs a finger on their behalf and all we hear is the same old tune (the Afghanistan developments).

[Salim] Is the current jihad in Kashmir for the establishment of an Islamic state there or just to liberate it from Hindu injustices.

[Khan] Allah, may He be exalted, says in His book: "And those who strive in Our cause, We will certainly guide them to Our paths." [Koran 29:96] We strive so God's word will reign supreme. Our work is to promote virtue, prohibit vice, and call to Allah in the occupied valley. In the future, power will be in the hands of the mujahidin. We will not betray our martyrs' blood and we will remain, Allah willing, loyal to the goals for which we rose to fight and struggle. We will strive to establish an Islamic government and a wise caliphate. We do not fight so Kashmir will gain independence from India or so it will be with Pakistan. Rather, we want Muslims and their lands to be united. We strive so Pakistan, Kashmir, and all Muslim countries will become one state and a united land, culminating with an Islamic caliphate in the distant future. In the near future, we will strive to liberate Muslims suffering repression, torture, murder, and rape at the hands of the infidels and the enemies. Today, we are not talking about what to do tomorrow but about what to do today. We strive to release Muslims in Kashmir from the injustices and oppression of the Hindus. They are oppressed not because they are Kashmiris but because they have said "Allah is our God." Today it is the liberation of Muslims; tomorrow establishment of the Islamic caliphate.

[Salim] Any final word you wish to address to Muslims through AL-JIHAD?

[Khan] Allah's prophet, may His peace and prayers be upon him, said, "No people have abandoned the jihad without being humiliated." He, peace be upon him, also said, "Jihad is the peak of Islam." One must fight oppression. In today's unjust world, the Jew, the Christian, the Buddhist, and the communist are the oppressor and Muslims are the oppressed. In Tajikistan, for example, the oppressor is Russia and the oppressed is the Muslim; in India, the oppressor is the Hindu government and the oppressed is the Muslim, and the same goes for Bosnia, Chechnya, and other places. Because we have abandoned the jihad, we have been subjected to humiliation and insult. Muslims are massacred everywhere because of their faith, their worship of Allah alone, and their renunciation of all but Allah. Invocation without action is not enough. Allah's prophet, may His peace and prayers be upon him, left Medina and went to Badr, where he inspired Allah for victory.

[Begin box, p 21]

Identification Card

Name: Shaykh Sa'adatullah Khan;

— Born in 1960 [as published] in Pakistan;

— Founded the movement with a number of mujahidin in 1980 after participating in the Afghan jihad as of the start of that year;

— A graduate of the Islamic Sciences College in Karachi;

— Married and has five children;

— Acknowledged as the movement leader in 1991. [end box]

Pakistan: Kashmiri Leaders Under Arrest on Election Eve

BK2905135596 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, houses of the senior Hurriyat [All Parties Hurriyat Conference] leaders were besieged in Srinagar today by heavy military contingents in an effort to prevent large-scale antipolls demonstration on the eve of the final act of the polls drama being enacted tomorrow.

According to KMS [KASHMIR MEDIA SERVICE], the house of Syed Ali Gilani and Shabir Ahmed Shah, senior All parties Hurriyat Conference leaders, were surrounded this morning by a large number of troops and the two leaders are under virtual house arrest.

PTV special correspondent, Ghulam Nabi Khayal reports from New Delhi:

[Begin recording] All prominent leaders of the Hurriyat Conference were put under house arrest in Srinagar since this morning. Huge contingents of police and paramilitary forces were deployed around their houses asking them not to venture outside, including other inmates in their houses. The Hurriyat leaders had planned to organize demonstrations against holding of elections. Amongst those who were thus confined are included Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, Syed Ali Gilani, Professor Abdul Ghani, Shabir Shah, and Yasin Malik. Another Hurriyat leader, Maulawi Abbas Ansari, however, addressed a protest rally at Ridibal in old Srinagar. In Pulwama in South Kashmir, soldiers were reported to have broken open some of the shops which were closed in connection with a 16-day long strike all over Kashmir valley. The reports of people staging demonstration at several places in Srinagar have also come in. In Bhadarwah in Southeast of Kashmir, three girls — Shafiqah and Babli, both 18, and Zarina 25 — were arrested for lead-

ing an anti-election processions. Ghulam Nabi Khayal, PTV News, New Delhi. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the valley and Doda district gave a deserted look today on the second day of the three-day anti-poll strike. The strike tomorrow on the polling day will be observed as civil curfew and all people will remain confined to their houses. The people of Srinagar, Udhampur, and Doda districts have once again reiterated that they will stoutly resist any attempt by troops to forcibly drag them to polling stations.

Mujahidin fired three rockets into Srinagar's lake side tourist district early today, underscoring a call on Kashmiris to boycott India imposed elections for India's parliament. The rockets fired one after another failed to hit the target — a cluster of hotels occupied by Indian security forces and election officials. Witnesses said the rockets landed on a nearby hill that houses the state-run television transmission center.

Pakistan: Joint Venture Agreed With Canada To Maintain PAF Aircraft

BK2705061896 Islamabad THE NATION in English 26 May 96 p 14

[Report by Altaf Hussain]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD—Shaheen Foundation, a subsidiary of Pakistan Air Force, has signed a joint venture agreement with the CAE Aviation Limited of Canada to set up a Centre of Excellence at Islamabad for the maintenance of aircraft. The Centre, which will be completed in three phases, will initially provide maintenance facilities for a fleet of 13C C-130 aircraft currently under use of PAF [Pakistan Air Force]. "Our eyes are set on 200 C-130 planes owned and operated by many countries of the Middle East", said Larry Prokop, President CAE, while addressing a Press conference after the signing of the agreement here on Saturday morning.

First of its kind in the region, the Centre is expected to start operations in November this year with an initial cost of US \$3-4 million. The CAE owns 63 percent equity shares of the project, whereas the Foundation controls the rest of 37 per cent shares.

"We intend to start maintenance of 13 C-130 aircraft and then expand operations to include the overhauling of other military aircraft in use of PAF and over 50 civilian aircraft being used in the country", said Air Marshal (Retd) Shafique Haider, Managing Director Shaheen Foundation (SF).

According an SF source, Iran, which has around 100 C-30 aircraft in its air force fleet, is likely to become a

major client of the Centre as, due to strained Iran-US relations, almost half of these planes have been grounded so far due to lack of spare parts and maintenance facilities. Other countries in the region having large C-130 fleets include Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The CAE will bring in technical expertise and maintenance and repairing equipment to the Centre which is being set up on the basis of transfer of technology. "Most important aspect of the joint venture is the testing equipment which the CAE is going to bring into Pakistan. They are extremely expensive and once became available in Pakistan, the country will have a world class maintenance facility of military aircraft in the country, said the official. The CAE has immense experience in the aircraft maintenance business and holds a number of licenses from world's top aircraft manufacturers providing know how and spare parts facility to a great extent for the benefit of Pakistan and other countries in the region. Such facility will reduce our dependence on the US for the maintenance and overhauling of military aircraft besides saving a lot of foreign exchange which is currently being spent on the maintenance of over 50 civilian aircraft", said the source. According to him, on average, Pakistan is paying US \$1.7 million on each maintenance and check up of a plane which goes to Singapore or other countries. There are immense possibilities of expanding operations in the future though their impact can not be quantified in monetary terms right now, the source added.

Commenting on a question why CAE chose Pakistan to set up such facility Prokop said, "we needed to expand our commercial activities outside North America and Pakistan happened to be the best choice due to a variety of reasons availability of low cost service facilities and a large aircraft fleet being some of the reasons".

ASF source told newsmen after the Press conference that a lot of parties were interested in setting up this Centre in Pakistan including a few US firms and GAMCO of UAE. He said that CAE was found to be best suited for such venture owing to its vast experience in the field. The Centre will be managed by CAE which will be assisted by around 100 PAF personnel, drawn from in-service and ex-service PAF staff. "The Centre once in operation will help Pakistan reduce its defense budget and offer job opportunities for the ex-PAF employees", said Air Marshal Shafique Haider.

He said that the creation and development of this center will provide both short and long term benefits to Pakistan. In the short term, significant initial investment will be made by CAE Aviation to update existing facilities and install the necessary tooling and equipment.

Over the long terms Pakistan will benefit not only through employment creation and the ensuing economic spin offs, but will also benefit through the attraction of an additional foreign investment that will result from the Center attracting foreign commercial and military aircraft to Pakistan, he said.

Shaheen Foundation has grown into a substantially large organization during the post few years, engaged in diverse activities ranging from running pay television channels to aviation and airline business.

Pakistan: Ukrainian Delegation Arrives for Talks on Tank Sale

BK2705045396 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
26 May 96 p 12

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Ukraine will hold marathon talks for the sale/purchase of the Ukrainian Main Battle Tank T-80UD from Sunday. "The Ukrainian delegation, led by their deputy minister for defense production, has already arrived for holding extensive talks. Talks will cover the whole package—the finances involved, the delivery schedule, and the technical, spares and maintenance support," official sources told THE NEWS on Saturday. The defense delegation from Kiev has been invited by the Defense Production Division, following a decision by the Pakistan Army to acquire 300 plus Main Battle Tanks (MBTs) from Ukraine, a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Trials of the diesel-driven T-80Us have already been completed. According to official sources, Pakistan has to finalize \$450 to 600 million deal before the end of the current fiscal year. That is why teams of both the countries will spend long hours every week to conclude the sale/purchase agreement," added the sources.

This is the first time that Pakistan is about to conclude a defense deal of this magnitude with a former state of the now dismantled Soviet empire. Kiev, said the sources, was offering its "King of Battle" tank at a very reasonable price, almost one-third as compared to its contemporary Western competitors.

Presently, Pakistan's offensive corps does not have any Russian pieces, though the Indian armored corps relies heavily on Russian vehicles.

If all goes well, the T-80U tank deal will be the biggest Pakistan Army has signed in the recent past. Sources said that the army would not require any extra money from the government for meeting its financial obligations for the T-80 tanks and would meet its

requirements for the modern tanks from its existing sources.

Although most details would be worked out in the forthcoming Pak-Ukraine negotiations, sources said that the army had already decided "in principle" to buy the Ukrainian tanks "to sharpen its punch for rapid retaliation."

Talking to THE NEWS, retired Lieutenant General Talat Masud said that Pakistan should ensure the supply of spares before concluding the T-80UD deal with Ukraine. He termed the tank a good vehicle which could meet all requirements of the Pakistan Army.

Pakistan: Authorities Arrest 2 for Counterfeiting U.S. Currency

BK2405131796 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 May 96 p 12

["Staff report"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Faisalabad, May 23 — The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has smashed an international gang floating forged currency and recovered about 8 lakh counterfeit notes of 100 dollar denomination.

The FIA received tips that an international gang dealing in printing and circulating fictitious currency notes was busy in printing US dollars of 100 denomination. Shahid Hussain, Assistant Director FIA Crimes Circle Faisalabad, mounted constant surveillance for five days. On confirmation that Shad Noor Press situated in Street No 7 Gali Wakilan Wali was busy in printing US dollars, the FIA team conducted a surprise raid and arrested printer Sadeem Ahmed and Arif Ali on the spot. The FIA team also recovered approximately \$775,200 US of one hundred denomination each. Raiding party has also taken into its custody two rota printing machines, ink, printing paper, paper cutter, negative positive films and printing plates etc.

According to reports, this gang was bulk supplier of counterfeited currency which was later circulated in the international money market.

The accused Arif admitted that an international smuggler of fake currency had offered him a handsome money for the printing of these forged US dollars. Shahid Hussain, said that he kept printing press under constant watch by roaming about this area in different dresses and consequently succeeded in rounding up the culprits.

Pakistan: Cities on Anti-Terrorism Alert During Muslim Festival

BK2705142496 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 27 May 96 p 12

[Report by Raja Zulfikar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD — Following intelligence information about possible "terrorism-inspired-sabotage" in the four main cities of the country on Aashura, the government has put its agencies on maximum alert to avoid any such happening.

And in a related move, top government officials were considering to suspend mobile and pager services in Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Peshawar and Lahore for two days; but a final decision could not be taken till late Sunday night.

Informed sources told THE NEWS that the interior minister had been informed by "several agencies several times that terrorists were planning attacks during Moharram processions. [no closing quotation marks as published]

Officials fear that explosives might be planted and detonated during Moharram processions.

Earlier, the government had received information that terrorists were out to harm important political figures. Accordingly, the security of some opposition leaders including that of the leader of the opposition had been beefed up.

Reports said the main targets of the terrorists were Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Lahore. "This does not mean that we are less attentive to other cities of Pakistan. All efforts will be made to ensure security everywhere the official said.

In Rawalpindi and Islamabad, the district administration banned pillion riding from Sunday evening. The ban will remain in force for two days.

Pakistan: India Accused of Shooting on School in Kashmir

BK2605170496 Hong Kong AFP in English 1644 GMT 26 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muzaffarabad, Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, May 26 (AFP) — A girl was killed and two other children were injured Sunday in cross-border firing by Indian troops on a school in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir, defence officials said.

The Indians opened fire on a primary school in Tauffar, a border village in Chakothi sector, some 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of Muzaffarabad, the state capital, the officials said.

Children were playing in the compound of the school when the Indians fired, killing 10-year old girl, named only as Sadia.

A boy, Abdul Wahid, also 10, was injured as was a girl aged eight years, officials said. The injured were taken to a military hospital in Muzaffarabad. Residents said shops were closed in Chakothi to protest the shooting.

India holds the southern two-thirds of Kashmir while Pakistan controls the rest of the disputed region, over which the two countries have fought two of their three wars since independence in 1947.

New Delhi accuses Islamabad of fomenting a Muslim separatist campaign in the Indian-held part of Kashmir, which has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

Pakistan denies the charge, but vows political and moral support, calling the campaign a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

Pakistan: Government Plans for New Budget, IMF 'Pressure' Noted

BK2505151096 Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 24 May 96 pp 1, 12

[Report by Almas A. Khan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore — The President of the FPCCI [Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry], Senator Ilyas Bilour, has said that the government is planning to levy direct and indirect taxes to the tune of Rs. [rupees] 56 billion during the fiscal 1996-97.

Addressing the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) here on Thursday, [23 May] he said that about Rs 20 billion taxes would be levied in the federal budget and the rest of the taxes would be levied in the mini-budgets.

Bilour said that, this year, the business community was ready to pay 15 to 20 percent more taxes than the taxes paid by them last year. This would raise between five to ten billion rupees for the state kitty", he said.

He said that the government, under the IMF pressure, wanted to squeeze the deficit from 4.5 to 4.00 percent which, according to him, would add to massive unemployment and decrease the exports. He suggested that the deficit should be reduced to the sustainable level of 4.4 percent so as to minimise the tax burden on the general public.

He said: "We need IMF money but without ruining our country. He said that, according to his calculations, the present rate of inflation was 15 percent while the

Adviser to the Prime Minister for Economic Affairs V.A. Jafarey claimed 9.5 percent inflation rate.

He further said that the government borrowing had touched the figure of Rs 67 billion during the last three months which was brought down by seeking loans from various corporations to give the impression to the IMF that the bank borrowing system was within reasonable limits.

Referring to the revival of the sick units in the country, he said that the government had constituted a committee to deal with the sick units. The committee had decided the fate of six industrial units in Peshawar, adding that around 50 percent of the sick industrial units would be revived by the end of the current year. He appreciated the role played by MNA [Member of National Assembly] Asif Ali Zardari for the revival of the sick industries. He said that, besides government authorities, the committee comprised two members from the business community and they would not support the wilful defaulters.

He said the country was in dire need of industrialisation but, unfortunately, it had come to a halt. The FPCCI president said: "Now it has to be decided by the government and the business community whether the country was to be industrialised or made a smugglers' paradise".

While talking about the foreign investment, Senator Bilour said that Indonesia was enjoying \$40 billion direct foreign investment while Pakistan was far behind this figure.

He said that, during the last two years, the electricity tariff was gradually increased by 137 percent which directly affected the cost of production.

He announced June 13 as the date for the post-budget meeting for the business community. The meeting venue is Pearl Continental Hotel, Bhurban, Murree.

Earlier, in his address of welcome, LCCI President Tariq Sayeed Saigol criticised what he called the ad hoc bureaucratic measures taken by the government to raise additional funds for its spendings. "At the time of presenting the current budget in the Parliament, the government promised that it would not announce any mini budgets during the rest of the year. [no closing quotation marks as published] However, in spite of its promises, changes in the financial act were made thrice through various ordinances, he said.

In this connection, he mentioned the following government measures:

— Rs 28.9 billion raised through steps announced in October 1995;

— Rs 3.5 billion raised by ordering the banking sector to pay income tax for 18 months during the current fiscal year, instead of the normal 12 months, under the garb of change of taxation period from calendar year to fiscal year;

— The most recent step of withdrawing sale tax exemption on 46 items on April 4, 1996 is going to fetch an amount of Rs.3.2 billion to the government exchequer. The amount is to be recovered in the remaining three months of the current fiscal year. The annual impact is going to be around Rs. 12.8 billion (3.2 x 4). The 46 items include items like machinery, computer parts and raw material items which are extremely essential for our economy if we sincerely want it to become stable and progressive.

Saigol claimed that the cumulative amount raised through these measures comes to Rs. 35.6 billion and "if we add Rs. 16 billion revenue measures announced at the time of presenting the budget, the total amount comes to Rs. 51.6 billion which is the record level high in the history of Pakistan". In addition to these measures, he said, the government was also borrowing heavily from almost every available source. "Where is all the money being spent?", Saigol asked.

Pakistan: Rs17 Billion in Taxes Proposed for New Budget

*BK2505150096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
25 May 96 p 1*

[Report by Absar Alam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, May 24 — A total of Rs [rupees] 17 billion taxes have been proposed for the year 1996-97 budget to fill a resource gap of around Rs 48 billion, says a well placed source.

In addition to the light taxation other measures like plugging holes in the revenue collection system and expansion of the tax net will be relied on to cover the shortfall. A decision to impose agriculture income tax has already been taken. This is expected to yield Rs 7 billion. Another measure will be to withdraw exemptions given to various sectors and cover more items under the General Sales Tax umbrella.

According to a well placed source, income tax collection from the non-salaried class will be expanded to include municipal committees. Talking to 'The Muslim' the source said that in the current fiscal year the government had levied only Rs 16.3 billion taxes. However, the government had to take further measures at later stages to improve its resource position.

The budget-makers, following the guidelines of the International Monetary Fund, have decided to overhaul

the inefficient tax collection system and include a larger segment of society into the tax net. To make this strategy work the government has decided to make all out efforts to improve the percentage of tax recovery and impose tax on maximum number of professionals, self-employed and traders in small towns as well.

Every year the Central Board of Revenue is given a revenue target of 1.5 per cent of the total Gross Domestic Production (GDP) to be collected as Income Tax, Sales Tax and Excise Duty.

The inefficient mechanism of the CBR, however, collects only 1/2 per cent of the GDP as taxes which is one-third of the target. The revenue collected through customs duty is not included in this target.

"At present, 1.5 per cent of the GDP means that a total of Rs 300 billion revenue can be generated through Income Tax, Sales Tax and Excise Duty alone whereas total tax collection target for the current year, including customs duty, is Rs 265 billion," the source said. He said the government did not want to put extra burden on sectors which already pay taxes.

It has, therefore, been proposed to focus attention on the improvement of collection system and expansion of the tax net, he said.

To expand the tax net, the government has adopted the slogan: 'Everybody should pay tax'. Following this strategy, the government will impose Income tax on traders, shopkeepers, advocates and doctors who work in towns and big villages. "Every trader, doctor or advocate will have to pay a minimum of Rs 6,000 per year as income tax if he has not declared his income under self-assessment scheme," the source said.

The sources said these new tax payers would not be haunted by the Income Tax officials and they would pay taxes independently to the exchequer. He said that from the next budget onward interference of tax department would be minimised and traders would be encouraged to pay taxes themselves without any fear. "Before entering into dialogue with the International Monetary Fund mission this past week, the government had completed its homework and pre-budget studies were conducted by the authorities", the source said and added, "on the basis of these reports the IMF conditions will be accommodated in the budget without hurting Pakistan's own interests. The strategy to improve the tax collection system will also help accommodate a large number of recommendations made by the IMF.

The economic managers of the Government are planning to be smart again to avoid the opposition's nasty criticism as the new budget gets final touches and to

abide by the IMF, which had been demanding the imposition of less taxes at a wider scale. Last year the government while presenting the budget in the National Assembly had levied light taxes to avoid the opposition's and traders onslaught but had to announce two mini-budgets at a later stage.

"This will not happen this time" the source said. He said the Government had decided to follow a two-pronged strategy: it will tighten the screw upon the Central Board of Revenue to improve its recovery drive and make every body pay tax," the source said. He said the government and the IMF agreed that less taxation on a larger number of people would bring better results in revenue collection.

Pakistan: Daily Defends IMF Proposals on Budget

BK2705145096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
27 May 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Fiscal Compulsions and Economic Health"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Budget is a powerful tool of fiscal management for improving the overall economic landscape of the country. It can be used to boost investment by way of providing incentives and removing the hurdles, expand the volume of goods and services and increase the GNP. Of course revenue generation is also a major aspect of the budget. Unfortunately, however, the role of budget seem to have been over-simplified in Pakistan to focus on revenue generation to the exclusion of almost everything else. The entire exercise of budget formulation has degenerated into devising means of milking public to bridge the income-expenditure gap. When people, reeling under the mounting tax burden protest, the government feigns helpless pointing at the conditionalities of IMF. In the first place, IMF does not impose conditions unilaterally. The government negotiates with IMF and arrives at an arrangement in the best interest of the country. Once the government has finalised a deal with a donor, it has to own the conditionalities that go with it. If these conditionalities accepted by the government, are not in the interest of the nation, then the implications are far more serious. It clearly means that the government has compromised national interests. Secondly, when IMF asks to reduce budget deficit it does not necessarily translate into levying more taxes. There are better ways of doing it. Elimination of wasteful expenditure for instance which the successive governments have been studiously ignoring. Tons of money has been spent without producing anything of substantial economic value. Controlling non development expenditure, broadening tax net and increasing the efficiency of tax collectors are also much better alternatives of raising revenue.

Increasing tax burden should have been the last option but the budget makers have made it the first priority and the poor of the society have to suffer for their inefficiency. Meeting expenditure through printing money is the worst form of taxation. As government quietly prints notes, the value of money in people's pockets keeps as quietly withers away. Twice, during the current fiscal year the State Bank has shown serious concern over the excessive borrowing by the government. The fact that it is coming from the relevant organ of the state rather than a perpetually grumbling opposition enhances further the enormity of the malady.

There is a glimmer of hope in the resolve of the Prime Minister to avoid heavy taxation and over-taxing the squeaking lower income groups. However, it was time the government stopped considering the deficit reducing measures in terms of merely putting the fiscal arithmetic right through increasing tax burden. The government has at its disposal a huge reservoir to draw from if it would only reduce its wasteful expenditure and curtail the non development one. Budget is more than a money minting device. Let us restore it to its original role of striking a balance between fiscal compulsions and economic health of the state economy which means making the budget a policy package which aims at increasing the over-all national wealth.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Details Offensive in Trincomalee

BK2405152196 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW
in Tamil 20 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The statement issued by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] headquarters today [20 May] on the offensive carried out in the Trincomalee District says nine soldiers and seven homeguards were killed. The military camp at Thihilakkadavai in the Trincomalee District came under LTTE attack and was razed to the ground. The Thihilakkadavai Sinhalese settlement village was set up to dismember Tiriyay and Pankulam Tamil villages. The military camp set up to protect this Sinhalese settlement village was destroyed by the LTTE in the ambush. The camp completely fell to the LTTE in about 30 minutes of fighting. With the exception of those killed, the troops and homeguard in the camp fled and managed to escape. A large number of weapons and other equipment were seized. Six freedom fighters from the LTTE side attained martyrdom in this successful ambush. They are: Major Pulithavan from Batticaloa, Captain Vishnu from Trincomalee, Captain Puratchi from Mannar, Lieutenant Mathivanan from Punkudutivu, Lieutenant Thiruvanan from Panai,

and Valiant Tiger Akilesan from Inuvil East. Our tributes go to those national heroes who sacrificed themselves in the holy war to protect our motherland from the enemies.

Government officials have accused Sri Lankan troops of resorting to missile attacks on thickly populated areas in the Vakara locality. They have charged that as these attacks are being carried out during daytime, government offices are not able to function. Tamil travelers were badly attacked at the Tandikkulam check post for no reason by the military hooligans the day before yesterday. The troops beat up the travelers, who were waiting to go to the south, with long batons. The onslaught was carried out indiscriminately on men, women, children, and patients. The Sri Lankan Government has made an announcement for the recruitment of 10,000 more soldiers. Following the recommendation of the military commander that the recruitment of 10,000 soldiers is essential to maintain control over the areas captured in the Jaffna peninsula, the government has agreed to this. Attractive advertisements have been prepared to woo Sinhalese youths to join the armed forces. A video commercial containing shots taken during the military operation in the Jaffna peninsula has also been prepared. The Sri Lankan Government, which last time waived educational qualifications for recruitment to the military, has this time even waived the stipulated height. Meanwhile, a BBC correspondent has announced that the Sinhalese youths do not have any interest in enlisting themselves into the armed forces. Reporting that in the recruitment drive for 10,000 soldiers only 3,500 persons got enrolled, the correspondent said that about 15,000 persons had deserted the Army during the past 18 months. Giving an account of the hesitation of Sinhalese youths to get drafted into the Army and the desertion of those already enlisted, the BBC Sinhalese Service correspondent asks: Who will be prepared to commit suicide?

Thanks.

The Tigers' aspiration: the motherland of Tamil Eelam!

Sri Lanka: Tamil Tiger Guerrillas Kill 10 Troopers in Fresh Battles

*BK2705092696 Hong Kong AFP in English
0914 GMT 27 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, May 27 (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas overran an army post in northeast Sri Lanka on Monday, [27 May] killing at least nine troops, and gunned down another trooper in a second attack, officials said.

Gunmen of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) staged a pre-dawn raid on the Meegagodella detachment in Trincomalee district and escaped with their victim's weapons, officials said.

Eight soldiers were killed in the initial attack and an officer who led a reinforcement column was ambushed and killed. At least 10 soldiers escaped with injuries. There were no immediate reports of rebel casualties.

The Defence Ministry in a statement said another soldier was killed and two others wounded in the northern peninsula of Jaffna Sunday [26 May] by a group of Tamil Tiger infiltrators.

Security forces took control of Jaffna this month but sporadic hit-and-run attacks have become routine in the battle-weary region where the government has launched a major campaign to resettle civilians.

There was no immediate word from the LTTE about the attacks, but in a statement sent here Monday, the Tigers said they had killed six soldiers in Jaffna three days ago.

The Tigers are leading a protracted campaign for independence in the northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated. More than 50,000 people have died in fighting since 1972.

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